

RÜGE played against artillery colonel LACKMANN and air force colonel QUEISSNER or against the rookie engineer general MEISE.

Now and then SPEIDEL was called to the phone, otherwise they didn't have much interest in the fighting on the invasion front.<sup>1</sup> We can hardly imagine it, but the 'table tennis player' was the same man who later became NATO's supreme commander in Europe.

It seems a mockery that the headquarters of Army Group B, which was directly affected by the invasion, was killing time by playing table tennis while death and chaos reigned at the front.

Instead, false reports were issued about the situation at the front and observed the resulting wrong decisions of others.

The staff of Army Group B obviously managed to hide their actions from Field Marshal ROMMEL, who risked his life every day outside. How else could it be explained that Field Marshal ROMMEL wrote a letter to HITLER after SPEIDEL's arrest, in which he praised his (former) Chief of General Staff to the skies: "In the West, SPEIDEL proved to be an extremely competent and hard-working General Staff from the very first few weeks boss. He took the baton firmly by the reins, had a lot of understanding for the troops and faithfully helped me to improve the defensive readiness on the Atlantic Wall as quickly as possible with the available means." Field Marshal ROMMEL did not realize what the game was until the end own staff and especially his chief of staff SPEIDEL, who was assigned to him by unknown interested parties, played.

<sup>1</sup> Paul CARELL, *they are coming!*

*Invasion 1944*, Ullstein, Berlin

171997, p. 112 f

## **Dept. 4: disorganization of the defense, blocking of the reserves**

In addition to preventing the alarm from being raised in good time, the conspirators resorted to the second program point they had been preparing for a long time: "Ordered Misconduct." A hopeless confusion was caused or the defense was weakened by a delayed and then completely insane and far from the front issuing of orders.

In addition to targeted disinformation, combined with messages and doctored situation reports, misconduct by the German troops was 'ordered' that made a mockery of any warfare. The fact that this was no coincidence, but an agreed method, can be clearly seen from the many disinformation, "relocations" and delay orders that ran the same way over and over again.

It took weeks for the chain of command in Normandy to be properly restored!

The absurdities of these blunders also included the events surrounding the (non) deployment of the armored divisions, which otherwise would have brought the invasion to a quick end on the beach.

So it came about that the infantry divisions on the beach were instead completely smashed within a few days without the help that was available being allowed to come.

A well-rehearsed chorus of commanders and staff officers who were conspiring with the enemy or at least systematically sabotaging it had ensured that the fully adequate armored combat units available were neither deployed in good time nor as a whole, but could only reach the front after death marches and were burned out piecemeal, one after the other to become without being able to achieve much.

The infantry divisions, on the other hand, which were much more suitable for the rigid defense of the "tank-hostile" terrain, were not sent to Normandy until the Allied breakthrough and the transition to the war of movement became apparent - just in time to be crushed by the mobile Allied tanks. Was it just 'coincidence' that directed this?

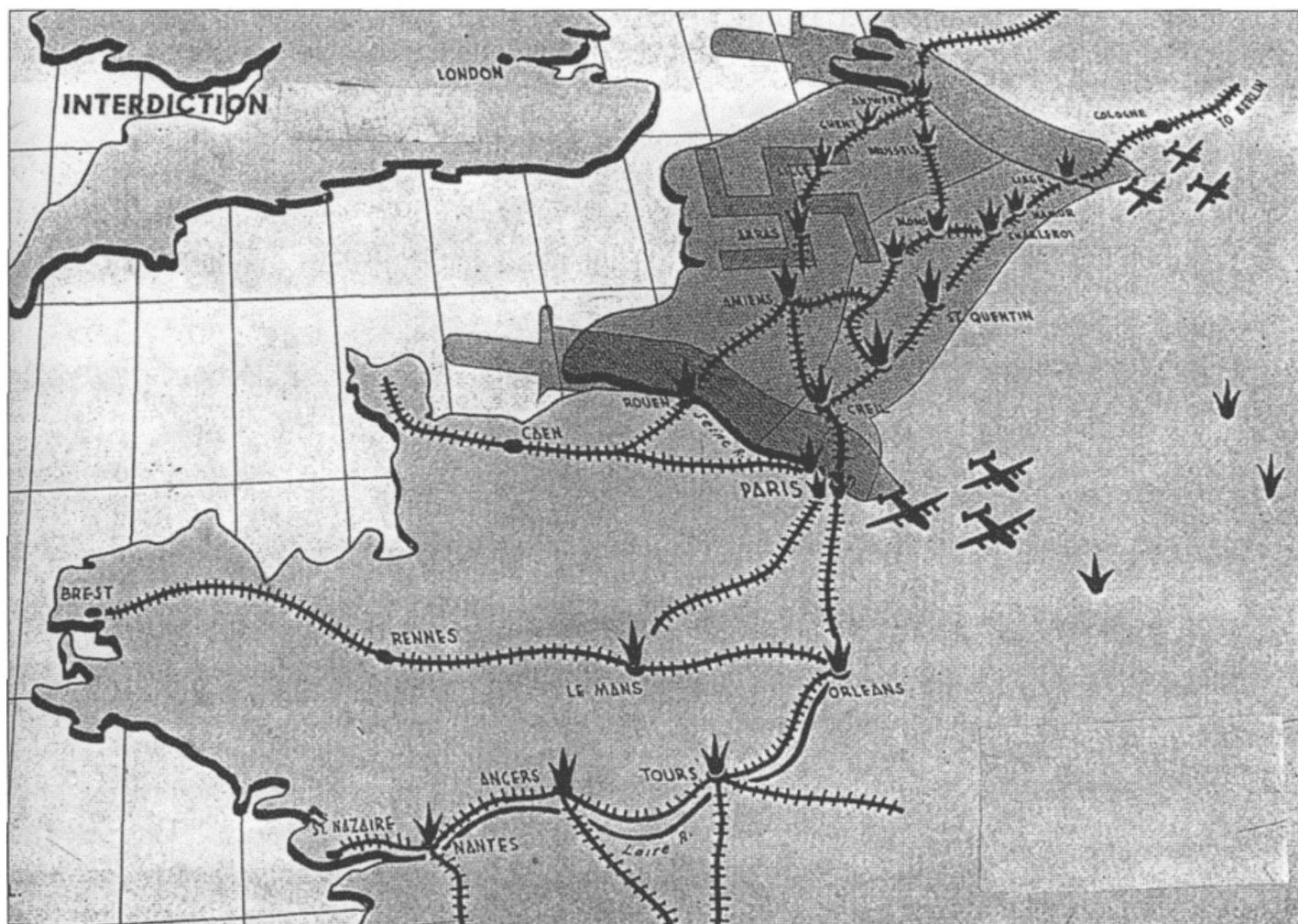
In addition to the army, the navy and air force were also victims of these deceptive measures. Even the weather service had its 'disinformers'! All the incidents described above now make sense together.

High treason and sabotage helped the Allies to land on the mainland and fight for a bridgehead.

## **Department 5: ›Inexplicable supply problems?**

In contrast to other armies, particularly the US Army, the German Wehrmacht devoted a remarkably small number of its members to management, administration and logistics. As a result, their logistical cover was often remarkably thin, and this also applied to central enterprises. In this way, a few people, deployed in the right (or wrong) place, could already have serious consequences. "The Army Quartermaster General, General Eduard WAGNER, came to the command post of Army Group B in May to coordinate the necessary measures in the west."

Unfortunately, General SPEIDEL, who tells us about this on page 44 of his book *Invasion 1944*, did not want to tell what the then chief of German supplies was 'coordinating' there. It wasn't the supplies for the western army, because despite a sumptuous feast that ROMMEL had served up for Gourmet WAGNER, it didn't get any better after WAGNER's visit - on the contrary. It is known that there was a dispute with Field Marshal ROMMEL at that time. Later, during a conversation with Field Marshal VON KLUGE, he raised serious allegations against General WAGNER.



Three months before the invasion, the Allies began an effective aerial blockade campaign against railroad supplies in France and Belgium.

If one wanted to expertly sabotage the German supply from within, one could have taken advantage of this.

Allied air superiority was not the only decisive factor. Long before the start of the Normandy landings, the Allied air forces were making great efforts to destroy the German supply routes across France in a systematically organized campaign of annihilation. For this purpose, a series of 'Interdiction Limes' (interdiction zones) were set up, most of which were based on river courses. Transports that would normally only have taken days took weeks. Attacks by the French Resistance and targeted sabotage by French railway employees also contributed to making France's dense railway network an obstacle course for German supplies.

With no air defenses,  
the Germans suffered  
terrible losses in  
trucks and horse-  
drawn carriages.



This led to extensive reloading of rail transport onto the road, where transport performance continued to decline due to low efficiency. The constant bombardment of the road network by fighter-bombers and light twin-engined bombers eventually caused terrible losses among the German trucks and horse-drawn carts, which still had to carry the lion's share of the German supplies.

Especially in the initial phase of the Battle of Normandy, the German supply troops then showed serious 'deficits'. hunches arise! After initial 'uncertainty', however, they got used to the new way of fighting. they moved at night,

used the Seine for ship transport and during the day only advanced along heavily flak-protected advance roads. A post-war French military expert stated: 'Only the lack of transport capacity and the constant bombing finally restricted the supply of the forward-deployed parts. At the end of the battle, the Germans had mastered the scenario of troop movements to perfection.«<sup>1</sup> This was particularly evident in the German counterattack ›Operation Liège‹ in August 1944. However, by this time the Battle of Normandy was as good as lost.

<sup>1</sup> Bernhard ZÜRNER, *Hitler. General against his will?*, Vo  
winckel 2001, p. 239.

So let's look at the alleged 'deficits' and 'uncertainty'  
ten a little closer.

**Important supply bases were deliberately  
dismantled and moved back .** What can be said is that

in 1944, despite all the bombing raids, sufficient supplies were available in the West in good time before the landing to be able to resist for months.

Nevertheless, ROMMEL's soldiers lacked ammunition and fuel in ent  
parting moments.

High German officers like General PEMSEL and Colonel VON DER

In the post-war period, HEYDTE complained about erroneous ideas about "members  
of the German High Command" when it came to supply issues.

Decisive depots that had already been set up had been moved as far back as possible from the rear of the front that was to be expected in the future. The people responsible gave the reason for their seemingly absurd actions that the enemy had long been aware of them through betrayal by the locals.

General PEMSEL wrote that even if the thesis had been correct, it was immaterial to the Allied air forces whether these depots were located near or far from the battle front. He spoke of the devastating effects on the German supply situation by moving the depots.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> David C. ISBY, *The German  
Army at D-Day*, Greenhill  
2004, pp. 157 f.

Here, too, the responsible members of the höhe  
ren German command level never known.

The whole thing seems all the more incomprehensible as Colonel HOEFFNER, the head of the West transport system, had to report to the OKW in May 1944 that he was unable to bring fuel and ammunition to the storage depots on the coast.

**Munitions replenishment via inland waterways –  
10 days delayed**

On July 10, 1944, General GAUSE, then Chief of Staff of Panzer Group West, stated that the Allies had a seemingly unlimited supply of ammunition and could fire twenty times what the Germans had.

Thus 80,000 rounds from Allied cannons could only be opposed to 4,500 from German barrels.

Army Group B in France had enough ammunition available to withstand a longer defensive battle. But, as already mentioned, this was pushed back before the invasion.

The railway network was partially paralyzed by Allied air raids, and there was a lack of road transport of all kinds, which was also constantly endangered by Allied fighter-bombers.

Field Marshal ROMMEL therefore had the neglected French inland waterways repaired for shipping in great haste, and large quantities of ammunition and fuel were soon being brought to Normandy in barges. By the end of the Battle of France, the Allies were unaware of this German method.

But then the replenishment of ammunition and fuel via the inland waterways, which had started so quickly, suddenly came to a standstill. The new Quartermaster West, Colonel Eberhard FINCKH, was to blame. FINCKH wasted ten full days .

On July 8, 1944, Field Marshal ROMMEL commissioned General Friedrich DIHM to investigate why the replenishment via France's inland waterways, which had been so smooth and smooth at first, had come to a standstill.

General DIHM soon found that Colonel FINCKH's bungling and indifference was to blame for the delay, and when Field Marshal ROMMEL learned of General DIHM 's scathing criticism of Colonel FINCKH's failure, ROMMEL , according to Admiral RUGE , "went on the palm." After Admiral RUGE , the agitated General SPEIDEL managed only with difficulty to dissuade Field Marshal ROMMEL from taking any major action on Field Marshal VON KLUGE

In contrast to ROMMEL , SPEIDEL knew that FINCKH had only been sent to Paris by Quartermaster General WAGNER to support the conspirators there. these activities

<sup>1</sup> David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 154 and 160.

seemed to have taken over Colonel FINCKH in such a way that he criminally neglected his real task of supporting the supplies for the fighting front, unless there was a bad intention behind it, as with numerous other "coincidences".

### **Sea forts without provisions**

In early 1944, HITLER issued orders that ports that might be Allied targets in the event of an invasion should be designated "fortresses." They were to be held to the last man in order to deny the Allies the necessary port capacities. The Fuehrer believed that denial of ports would present the Allies with major supply problems in the event of an invasion. These included important port cities such as Boulogne, Cherbourg, Le Havre and Brest. There would still have been enough time to obey the orders.

In fact, once the landings began, it turned out that port cities like Cherbourg were favorite targets for the Allied landing troops.

The sea fortresses on the Atlantic were the core bases of the Atlantic Wall and were accordingly equipped with heavy and very heavy artillery and surrounded by dense chains of bunkers. The *Völkischer Beobachter* wrote confidently on June 19, 1944: "Cherbourg will be the enemy's undoing: the North American First Army has approached the west coast of the Cotentin Peninsula, thereby interrupting Cherbourg's land connection with interior France. A partial success has been achieved here. It should not be reduced in size. The Americans, west of Ste.-Mère-Eglise, have gotten where they intended to be in the first 48 hours, albeit with a considerable delay... They will strive above all to begin the actual siege of Cherbourg.

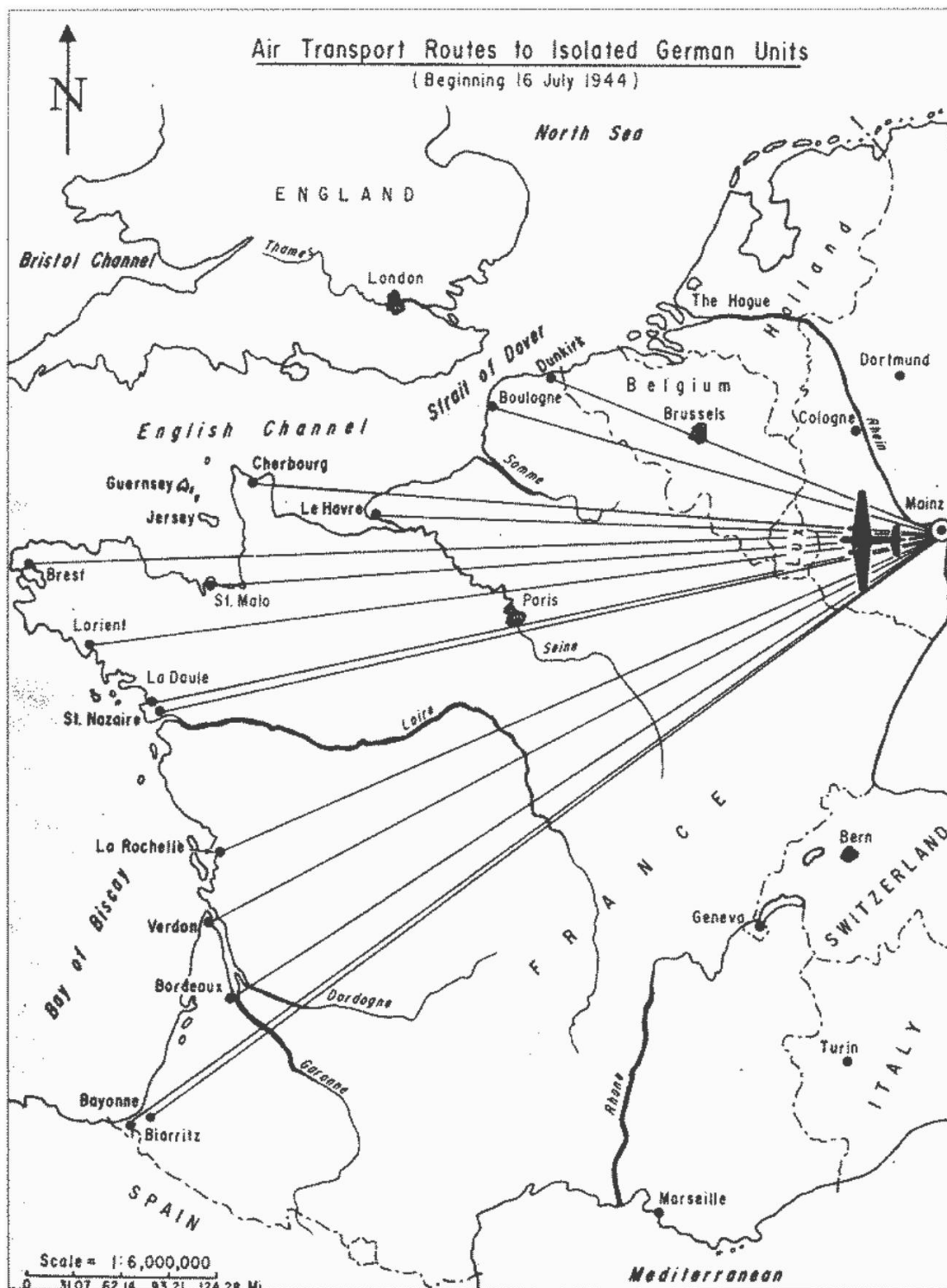
You will come across fortifications that you have never seen before in Italy or even in Normandy. The port of Cherbourg is also protected on the land side according to the principles of the new German art of fortification. Here are works of a mightiness with a firepower that the troops of the western powers have not hitherto encountered. The fortress also has supplies of all kinds... The American advance in this area was intended to create a port. They will soon feel how far they are from it."

In fact, it turned out that the important sea forts on the Atlantic had been expanded since the end of the western campaign in 1940, but had not been stocked with supplies before they were surrounded by Allied troops, as was possible and planned. The goods stored there were not even sufficient for a short time.

Was stupidity at work here, or was something completely different behind it? Major General Fritz MORZIK, head of the German transport aviation associations during the war, then wrote indignantly in his book about the transport operations of the German Air Force in World War II on behalf of the USAF:<sup>1</sup> »Precisely why this did not happen, e.g. B. why supplies - at least enough to last for a short time - were not arranged in advance at these crucial locations is certainly a legitimate question ... Also, the air supply operations to these bases were serious due to the insufficient preparation of the army supply authorities. It also turned out to be a serious mistake on the part of the German High Command that none of the experienced Wehrmacht supply officers who had successfully organized the air supply on the Eastern Front and had gained valuable experience in the requirements of such missions were ordered west with the transport units became. The Quartermaster of the 3rd Air Fleet recommended to the Army Quartermaster General in the West that a number of experienced supply officers should be detached from the Eastern Front, but his recommendation was again rejected. There were also examples of 'strange occurrences'.«

In brave operations, the wrong ammunition was dropped on the German paratroopers, who were having serious supply problems, despite urgent requests, but one of the most unbelievable incidents occurred in the air supply of the Cherbourg fortress. The Cherbourg peninsula was the scene of a stubborn struggle by the German occupation against the American siege ring. From June 20 to 30, 1944, air supply was provided by German transport aircraft flying in at night. When the enclosed troops urgently needed food, especially bread, it was decided to fly in supplies of flour, as the bakeries in the enclosed area were still intact. However, the flour was packed in sacks that were filled into 1,000-kilogram wooden air-drop containers. Despite repeated warnings that the wooden containers, even if loaded with





Hampered by army supply officers: air supply to cut-off sea fortresses on the Atlantic front. According to MORZIK, "German Air Force Airlift Operations", in: *USAF Historical Studies*, no. 167, Arno 1968, p. 299.

parachutes would hardly survive the landing intact, especially if, as was often the case, the parachutes did not fully open in time, the Wehrmacht supply authorities insisted that they had to be dropped in this way.

The results were exactly as predicted. Most of the containers shattered upon impact, and after the mission the drop area looked like a landscape after a heavy snowstorm. Luckily there was no rain that night, so some of the flour was saved and actually used for bread. This fiasco could have been avoided if the army supply authorities had listened to the Luftwaffe representatives and carried out their recommendations that the flour be filled in 500 kg containers.

Despite the urgency of the mission, the one extra day needed for decanting wouldn't have made much of a difference. Nevertheless, a little later another load of wooden 1000 kg containers full of flour was brought to the same airfield to be loaded onto the transport planes bound for Cherbourg. The commanding officer of the unit now refused to carry out this mission. His refusal had the full support of the quartermaster of the 3rd Air Fleet, who then made every effort to quickly repack the flour into 250 kg containers, which were then safely dropped.

Despite the best efforts of the tree-top transports at night, constantly threatened by English and American night fighter squadrons, the great fortress of Cherbourg fell relatively quickly. Other sea fortresses such as Le Havre, St. Málo and Brest, on the other hand, held out longer and were supplied from the air until the last moment. Even after the evacuation of France, the He 111s of the TG 30 continued to fly from Mainz until the last days of the war in order to supply cities such as La Rochelle, Bordeaux and St. Nazaire with the essentials. The casualties of the transport planes were appalling. By the end of 1944, only a few original crews were complete before the June 6 landing.

Most of the alumni had been shot down and were either dead, missing, or prisoners of war.

The efforts of the air transport units in the West are, according to the chief of the transport aviation associations, in a strange

in contrast to the effective air supply to trapped units on the Eastern Front at the same time. The question is whether sabotage was involved here as well.

This strange failure of the army supply authorities was also shown in Cherbourg by the fact that part of the minefields of the city's protective belt consisted of mines without detonators. Not enough detonators were 'accidentally' supplied to arm all mine barriers. In this way, on June 27, 1944, American tanks were able to penetrate as far as the "Osteck" outwork, which dominated the airfield and the coast. According to Paul CARELL, Sergeant PLANER, who was stationed there at the time, said to his boss, Lieutenant Colonel KÜPPERS: "Never mind, whoever is responsible for this should be sent to the anti-tank ditch." CARELL then went on to ask who was responsible for this and many other things on the Cotentin peninsula was responsible: "Who? The living ask it and the graves, the endless rows of graves along the long road from Carentan via St. Mère-Eglise-Montebourg-Valognes-Théville-'Osteck' are silent question marks." He then, like other well-known authors, begins to ask the question whether in the Battle of Normandy everything always went right on the German side.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, nobody seems to have dared to give more precise answers. Didn't they want to - or weren't they allowed to?

<sup>1</sup> Paul CARELL, *they are coming! The invasion of 1944*, Ullstein, Berlin 1997, p. 260.

### **Crucial sabotage: new perspectives in the wake of July 20, 1944**

On July 22, 1944, Colonel Gruppenführer Sepp DIETRICH told Admiral RÜGE that the conspirators' sabotage efforts had upset the German war apparatus. ROMMEL's engineer general MEISE also wrote to his injured boss: »Today this constant sabotage of the Field Marshal's views due to the insufficient supplies of the Quartermaster General (conspirator Eduard WAGNER – comment Friedrich GEORG) appears in a different light.«<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 187.

### **›Bloody Fruits‹ — the summary of the German supplies in Normandy**

The members of the German supply organization accomplished great things in Normandy under the most difficult conditions

and had reached their peak effect just at the end of the battle, long after the decision had been made. The high bloody toll that the German truck columns, horse-drawn carriages and railroad workers had to pay to the Allied aircraft and the French Resistance took place against the background of planned sabotage by a few influential officers of the German supply services.

1 Rudolf LUSAR, *The German weapons and secret weapons of the Second World War and their further development*, JF Lehmanns, Munich 1956, p. 9.

What Major Rudolf LUSAR wrote in the preface to the first edition of his reference work, *The German Weapons and Secret Weapons of the Second World War*, published in 1956, applies particularly to the Normandy invasion :<sup>1</sup> "Weapons and ammunition that did not make it to the front, fuel for the troops was refused and was then destroyed himself, misdirected transports tried to undermine the morale of the troops and the people and reaped bloody fruits.« It is striking that LUSAR deleted this passage in later editions of his book - together with a number of other text passages. <sup>2</sup> The reader is welcome to puzzle over the reasons.

<sup>2</sup> In some cases, passages in his book prompted seemingly helpless denials from top US officers. In later editions, these passages were 'softened' until they were completely deleted in the last edition.

With regard to the relocation of larger German supply depots, which seems 'nonsensical', one can not without reason ask whether the said gigantic depots did not save the Allied advance in September 1944. The Allies, who were themselves struggling with serious supply problems, fell into the hands of several huge German depots at exactly the right moment, in early September 1944, completely undamaged.

The AP news agency reported on September 5, 1944: »Today the soldiers of the American XII. Corps of Major General EDDY captured a German Luftwaffe petrol depot near Lignes-en-Barrois with over 300,000 gallons of aviation fuel. At the same time it is reported that in a neighboring town a Wehrmacht camp with more than half a million pounds of frozen meat fell into the hands of the same corps. Thanks to the help of the Belgian Resistance, other US troops have captured military camps in Namur with enormous stocks of meat, butter and cheese, including 175,000 daily rations ready for transport, plus several hundred thousand bottles of champagne 2.5 million German cigarettes are a welcome addition to our soldiers, who have been complaining for a few days that our own are getting scarcer. They also found 200,000 gallons of gasoline in a depot near town."

How would the story have gone if the same 'lucky coincidences' (?) had come to the rescue of VON RUNDSTEDT's tanks in the Ardennes?

## **Dept. 6: Did the conspirators hold back troops for political reasons?**

In the spring of 1944, ROMMEL's Army Group B received from HITLER command of three Panzer Divisions in France, the 2nd, 116th and 21st Panzer Divisions.

As we illustrated above, however, only the weakest of them, the 21st Panzer Division, deployed on June 6 evening.

Today it is undeniable that General SPEIDEL held back two powerful army armored divisions from action in Normandy for a long time. Their two commanders, Lieutenant General Count Gerhard VON SCHWERIN (116th Panzer Division) and Lieutenant General Freiherr Heinrich VON LÜTTWITZ (2nd Panzer Division), belonged to the German resistance.

The former German tank commander General Leo GEYR V. SCHWEPENBURG reported that SPEIDEL confessed to him in 1947 that he had kept the 2nd and 116th Panzer Divisions out of the fighting in order to be able to use them in the conspiracy against HITLER. They had been kept in reserve in order to first arrest HITLER during his planned visit to the front and later on July 20, 1944 to be able to intervene politically. General GUDERIAN also criticized SPEIDEL's restraint of the two divisions: "His refusal may have had a political reason."<sup>1</sup> The historian David IRVING reported that SPEIDEL asked the commander of the 116th



Gerhard VON SCHWERIN.

Panzer Division informed that its division would be set aside as a reserve for the planned putsch against HITLER.<sup>2</sup> The other 2nd Panzer Division intended for the putsch, however, could not be held back by the conspirators for too long: on June 12, 1944, the OKH intervened and sent them on the Normandy front.<sup>3</sup>

Even at the Margival Conference on June 17, 1944, ROMMEL and SPEIDEL refused to transfer the 116th Panzer Division from the Pas-de-Calais to the Normandy front. With 350 tanks, the 116th Panzer Division was the strongest German armored unit in the West! Gerhard Graf von SCHWERIN was, as I said, commander of the 116th Pan-

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<sup>1</sup> Otto Ernst REMER, *Conspiracy and Treason about Hitler*, Remar Heipke 51993, p. 1 37 f., 153 u, 167.

<sup>2</sup> David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2000, p. 127 fu 181.

<sup>3</sup> On July 16, the 2.Pz.Div. separated from the front near Caumont and relocated south of Caen, whether this was for political reasons because of the imminent attempted coup is still unclear to this day.

division. When the invasion of Normandy began, SCHWERIN and his staff were relieved not to be "burned up" there on the first day of fighting; they were instead incomprehensibly moved away from Normandy to the Channel coast. On the drive past ROMMEL's command post in La Roche-Guyon,

SCHWERIN stopped in a nearby forest and dictated a memorandum on the situation in Germany to his Ia clerk, Staff Sergeant Gerhard LADEMANN . He described the situation as hopeless and spoke out in favor of liquidating the Nazi regime. He indicated that his 116th Panzer Division was loyal only to him personally. Then he had his Ic, Captain Arthur HOLTERMANN, his liaison to SPEIDEL, bring the one-page typewritten document, of which no copies were allowed to be made, to SPEIDEL 's castle.

Thus, while ROMMEL desperately sought reinforcements even from the Eastern Front and southern France, SCHWERIN's 116th Panzer Division remained idle until 19 July.

The restraint of these two divisions when the front was most difficult was an outrageous occurrence. Both were in close proximity to the invasion front and were seasoned, battle-hardened formations. They could have been deployed on the second day of the invasion at the latest and hit the Allies at a sensitive moment of weakness.

Instead, the High Command of Army Group B preferred to wait for the arrival of the SS division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler, which had been transferred from Belgium, and the SS Panzer units Hohenstaufen and Frundsberg coming from the east. This ensured a further delay in the arrival of the German reserves.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to all experience, these formations were brought up by day and thus suffered avoidable losses at the hands of superior Allied air force formations as they approached. They were also not deployed in a concentrated manner, as General GUDERIAN reprimanded, but were deployed in fragments by the High Command West. In this way they again suffered great losses.

<sup>1</sup> Heinz SCHMOLKE, *The War Decision. Treason in Normandy*, Historia, Horb 2004, pp. 23-26.

At that time the bad word arose that these SS formations should be burned in the interest of the conspiracy in order to eliminate them for the planned political events. This was confirmed by documents found by David IRVING, which contained a conversation between SPEIDEL and VON HOFACKER : »The presence of the strongest Waffen SS formations meant a serious concern. These are now to be used on the appointed day in such a way that they cannot detach themselves from the enemy.



Panzer troops  
(Panzerkampfwagen VI  
'Tiger II') of the Waffen  
SS in the forests of northern France.  
Left picture: British  
prisoners of war.

A reliable division (the Panzer Division SCHWERIN) was provided to shield Paris. « Unfortunately for the efforts of General

EISENHOWER's German helpers, the 116th Panzer Division was marched by OKH towards the front on July 19, 1944. General Count VON SCHWERIN, who was driving past La Roche-Guyon headquarters – this time in the opposite direction – had another letter delivered personally to General SPEIDEL in a sealed envelope. In it, VON SCHWERIN wrote that the last moment had now come for the Army Group to intervene in favor of an immediate end to the fighting, as the catastrophic development of the overall situation in all theaters of war must have demanded. The division was still at the Field Marshal's disposal without restriction. If she disappeared into the invasion's cauldron, she would no longer be available. VON SCHWERIN had further asked that the division only be used in emergencies, since it was probably one of the few divisions that had complete confidence in its leadership and that one could rely on in the event of a change in top leadership.

The General asked General SPEIDEL to be assured that he and the division could be counted on in any situation. it was no use

and the division had to go to the front. Six weeks after landing!

General Otto Ernst REMER accuses the "conspirators of July 20" of having held back many freshly formed troop units, including their equipment, for their planned overthrow in the German homeland.

As is known today, on June 1, 1944, the 4.4 million men in the field army faced 2.7 million in the home and reserve army on all fronts; 500,000 of them alone in alarm and marching units, most of whom were arrested by the "Valkyrie" order

<sup>1</sup> See: Paulus VON OBBERGEN, »Invasion 1944«, in: *Die Grenzmark*, volume 7-9/1962, p. 13, Roitham 1962.

A trace may be found in the case of Panzer Battalion 503, which with its Tiger and King Tiger tanks was one of the best equipped tank units of the time. Intended for use in the west, it was set up at the Ohrdruf military training area and often received (suspicious?) distinguished visits from a few members of the OKH.

The order to march the three operational companies of Panzer Battalion 503 to France was repeatedly postponed for reasons that were completely incomprehensible to the members of the Panzer Battalion.<sup>2</sup> Later it was transferred to Normandy only piecemeal and not all at once.

<sup>2</sup> Egon KLEINE and Volkmar KÜHN, *tiger. The history of a legendary weapon*, Motorbuch, Stuttgart 1981, p. 191.





Chapter 8

**Successful deception**  
**The Fiction of the Second ›Main Landing‹**

EISENHOWER and MONTGOMERY at a meeting. Their relationship hasn't always been smooth sailing. They never seriously considered a main landing near Calais, as the coastal conditions there were not suitable for a landing of this magnitude.

## Normandy was taken seriously too late

On May 5, HITLER had called on ROMMEL and RUNDSTEDT for reinforcements for Normandy at the expense of other sections of the Channel coast. However, mysteriously, HITLER had caved in against the concentrated resistance of both field marshals and had not ordered the concentrated reinforcement of Normandy himself, as he could have done. Despite RUNDSTEDT's opposition and, above all, the Chief of Staff of Army Group B, General SPEIDEL, he managed to transfer a parachute corps to Brittany and the 91st Airborne Division to Normandy to defend against airborne landings.

So it came about that on the day of the landing only seven divisions defended 300 kilometers of landing beach on Normandy. In fact, long after the invasion began, Field Marshal ROMMEL was convinced that the Anglo-American landings in Normandy were merely a side venture. ROMMEL'S Bio

As early as 1979, the graph Kenneth MACKSEY dared to make the bold statement that ROMMEL "was sometimes even prompted to come to the wrong conclusion by false reports from circles in the German military opposition at the time." In fact, the historian David IRVING was able to show that this was so.<sup>1</sup> SPEIDEL's staff misled ROMMEL by constantly warning against landings in the Pas-de-Calais. Even weeks after the June 6 landing, ROMMEL

<sup>1</sup> David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 164 f., 197 and 20

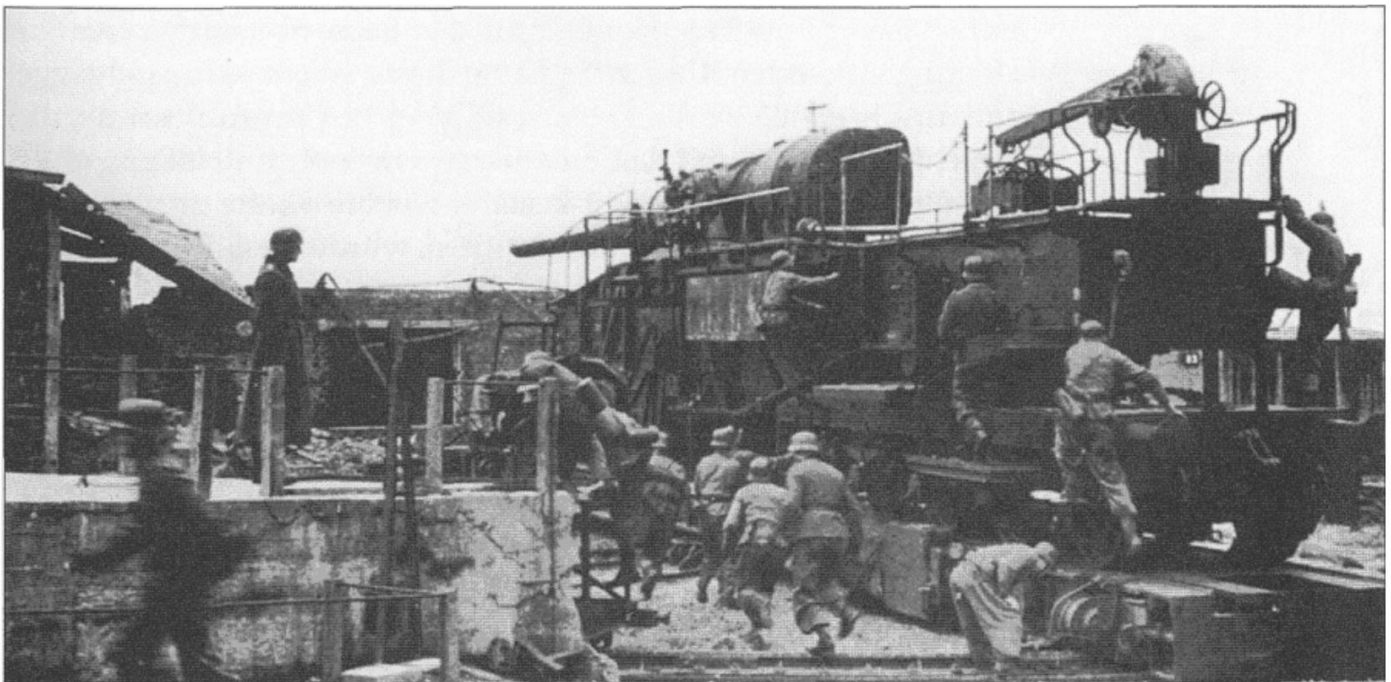
The German military opposition prevailed with their view that the

landing would take place at the narrowest point of the canal, namely near Calais. here

heavy railway guns await

the invasion. From: Paul CARELL, *you are coming!*

*The invasion of 1944*, Ullstein, Berlin 1997.



and fed the OKW false strength ratings of 'the enemy'. Thus, on July 9, SPEIDEL still insisted that more than 60 large units were still ready in England. He had repeatedly "added" more to the number of 45 invented by Alexis VON ROENNE's OKH department "Foreign Heere West" in order to suggest the danger of a second landing. In fact, there were only 12 major associations in England at the time!

Let's consider, therefore, how it came to be about this grotesque German estimate of the Allied troop strength could come.

### **Army Group B Headquarters prevented the 15th Army from engaging in Normandy on the day of the landing**

As early as June 6, 1944, the 7th Army had rejected the offer of the 15th Army in the Pas-de-Calais to come to their aid.

In the first few days after the landing, both the OKW and the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief West worried whether it wasn't high time that all forces, including the superiority of the 15. to throw the army into battle on the Normandy front in the Pas-de-Calais. This was the danger to General EISENHOWER's aides that had to be averted.

On the evening of June 8, Colonel ZIMMERMANN from the Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief West called General SPEIDEL and told him that the OB Army Group (Field Marshal VON RUNDSTEDT - comment Friedrich Georg) had to decide whether with the ones now available decisive success could be achieved during the course of the night: "Mayor West is of the opinion that this is not the case and that, with ruthless exposure of other fronts, there is a need to bring in more forces." If SPEIDEL does not succeed, to prevent this, the Allied invasion would again be under mortal threat.

General SPEIDEL therefore persuaded Field Marshal ROMMEL to call the OKW General JODL so that he should forbid the Commander-in-Chief West to interfere in this way. However, General JODL insisted that another enemy landing in the OB West area was not to be expected. Field Marshal ROMMEL, misinformed by the numbers generated by the "Foreign Heere West" department and by General SPEIDEL's staff, replied that the Allies had only deployed one army group so far and that it was therefore necessary to avoid any forces from the area of the 15. army

to deduct. When General JODL replied: "A second landing is not to be expected," Field Marshal ROMMEL simply put down the phone.<sup>1</sup> When a few days later, on June 15, 1944, Field Marshal VON RUND STEDTS la.,

Bodo ZIMMERMANN, General SPEIDELs 1c, STAUBWASSER called and said that more forces had to be withdrawn from the 15th Army, Colonel STAUBWASSER took vigorous action and again prevented reserves from being withdrawn from the Pas-de-Calais. This happened even though the Luftwaffe had meanwhile realized that the Allies had already concentrated their entire tactical air force in Normandy. Field Marshal VON RUNDSTEDTS 1c., Lieutenant Colonel Wilhelm MEYER-DETRING, said the prophetic words: "We cannot let a threat drag us about until August." That is exactly what was to happen!

<sup>1</sup> David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of despair against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 113 ff. and 132.

### **June 17, 1944: The Wehrmacht command staff raises concerns about the leadership of the German western army**

On June 17, 1944, the Commander-in-Chief West gave a review of the development of the situation so far in Margival. He established that the enemy had not reached his objective in space or time, but had pushed the German forces into the defense. Now, above all, Cherbourg had to be protected. A second landing must be expected, for which the enemy still has 20 to 30 large formations and airborne formations available.

In fact, there were strong forces in the German leadership that no longer wanted to accept this news of an alleged impending second invasion. In a brief assessment of this report by Field Marshal VON RUNDSTEDT, the Wehrmacht High Command at the OKW suggested that the Normandy front in particular be reinforced, while accepting the risk on the other coasts – in part by withdrawing from other fronts, such as the OB Süd west.<sup>2</sup> There would still have been enough reserves available at that time.

<sup>2</sup> Gerd SUDHOLT and Franz KUROWSKI, *That was the Second World War. 1944*, Druffel, Berg 1994, p. 287

In north-eastern Normandy alone there were two German armies standing by, who together in the fighting area would still have been able to turn the tide.

In fact, there were high-ranking personalities who wanted to prevent exactly this development, like the devil would prevent contact with holy water.

## The Riddle of Margival

The real course of the Margival Conference has remained one of the great mysteries of the Battle of Normandy to this day. The heads of the OKW, Marshal KEITEL and General JODL, had persuaded HITLER to listen to the views of VON RUNDSTEDT and ROMMEL on the spot. Their goal was a revision of German campaign planning, which - influenced by false intelligence reports - had left the units fighting for their lives in Normandy alone and prevented the transfer of forces from other areas not threatened by invasion. However, everything stayed the same!

The discussions and contents of the conference are presented today in such a varied, misleading and contradictory way that apart from the fact that there was no ruthless reinforcement of the invasion front afterwards, not a single really reliable conclusion can be drawn. The descriptions by General SPEIDEL, who described the events in Margival as an eyewitness and who described the events in Margival as an eyewitness, are now mostly accepted as true put political usefulness ahead of historical truth.”<sup>1</sup>, 2

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth MACKSAY, *Rome mel. Battles and campaigns*, Motorbuch, Stuttgart 1982, p. 286 f.

<sup>2</sup> Elmar HEINZ, »Second Front« in: *DWJ*, June 6, 2004, pp. 86-89.

In the opinion of the author, there must be reasons for this 'fog throwing' in the environment of the Margival conference, which to this day obscures the view of the truth. Just one example: ROMMEL, who according to SPEIDEL had a bitter argument with HITLER in Margival, later wrote to his wife on June 18 in a letter: »... we're getting a lot of supplies now. The guide was very nice and in a good mood. He recognizes the seriousness of the situation." So no sign of a fight!

This letter alone contradicts everything that was said about the Margival conference in the post-war period. It would also be of interest to find out what was said there about the promised V and miracle weapons.

While ROMMEL was apparently encouraged to persevere as a result of Margival, the fact is that HITLER suddenly canceled his planned visit to Army Group B Headquarters at La Roche-Guyon the next day.

A new theory assumes that HITLER was afraid of being arrested by conspirators. In fact, there is some evidence in his previous behavior of 'unusual security measures

The Führer headquarters  
›Wolfs Gorge 2‹ in Margival,  
8 kilometers northeast of  
Soissons in northern France.  
The actual course of the  
conference held there on  
June 17, 1944 is unclear.



As late as May 1944, ROMMEL  
met HITLER at the Führer's  
headquarters (in the middle:  
Wilhelm KEITEL). After the  
meeting, in which he mainly  
reported on the development of  
defense work, ROMMEL  
said: "The Führer trusts me, and  
that's enough for me." From:  
David IRVING, *Rommel*,  
Weltbild, Augsburg 1990.



men. But if that was the case, why didn't he take action after his sudden  
return to Berchtesgaden? One of the many mysteries of those June days that  
will probably never be solved!

## Did General Speidel want Hitler arrested on June 19, 1944?

Even before the invasion, Field Marshal ROMMEL was waiting for a visit from HITLER. However, for unknown reasons, HITLER did not come. But when the invasion situation became critical and Field Marshal VON RUNDSTEDT requested that one of the key personalities at headquarters should come west for a discussion, HITLER and General JODL surprisingly appeared on June 17, 1944 with a small entourage at the Führer's headquarters in Margival, north of Soisson, where VON RUNDSTEDT and ROMMEL were ordered with their chiefs of staff.

On June 16, HITLER decided to visit the western front. That same night, his personal pilot BAUR had to fly from Airing to Metz with a four-engined Focke Wulf FW 200 'Condor' HITLER and a small escort. Three twin-engined night fighters flew escort. During this "Blitzaktion" all German flight operations were stopped and any artillery fire was forbidden. On June 17, 1944, HITLER drove from Metz under the protection of the "Führer Accompaniment Battalion" on the ground and under a shield from German fighters in the air to Margival to the Führer's headquarters "W2".

1 Franz W. SEIDLER and Dieter ZEICERT, *The Führer Headquarters. Plans and plans in the Second World War*, Herbig, Munich 2000, p. 191 f.

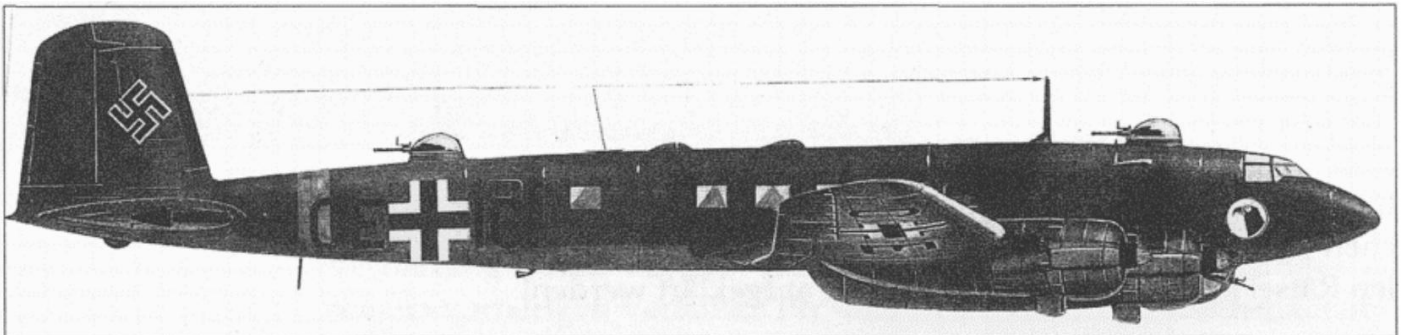
HITLER's Focke Wulff FW 200C1/U-1 of the FdF (Fliegerstaffel des Führers), with which he flew in June 1944 to the fateful Margival conference (Wolfschlucht 2). Because of the danger from English night fighters, the pilot plane was painted black on its underside.

Participants in Margival's one-day meeting later recalled that two SS men stood directly behind HITLER the entire time. These measures of distrust were in effect by the 20th

July 1944 unusual in HITLER's Führer headquarters. Did the Führer know anything about the conspiracy against him?

After the discussion of the situation, Field Marshal ROMMEL said in the strongest possible terms that nobody from the Führer's environment had been seen at or behind the front. Obviously had

this its effect on HITLER. Because shortly before the return journey, Lieutenant-General SCHMUNDT, HITLER's chief adjutant, suddenly turned to General SPEIDEL and said that he should prepare HITLER's trip to La Roche-Guyon or another suitable place for June 19 and the front commanders of the various departments





Order weapons and branches of arms there. The guide will then speak to them personally.

Did SPEIDEL realize that this was a unique opportunity for him to get his hands on HITLER ? On the way back via Paris he immediately sought out co-conspirator General VON STÜLPNAGEL and informed him of HITLER's imminent drive to the front . According to General Otto Ernst REMER , this was the signal for the military commander in France: "The necessary measures were taken immediately."<sup>1</sup> But HITLER did not come. The theory that is often put forward today that

HITLER only left the Führer's headquarters in Margival prematurely because a stray VI had crashed near the camp is pure speculation.

In this way, HITLER possibly escaped arrest by his opponents in the High Command of the Western Army by a hair's breadth. But the question must be asked whether they would have succeeded in arresting HITLER at all. A group of resistance officers would certainly have been found who would have carried out such an arrest. However, it is doubtful whether the German front-line troops would have allowed their commander-in-chief to be arrested in the middle of the defensive battle. The fact that after the failed assassination attempt on July 20, it was precisely the officers of the 116th Panzer Division, which was viewed as hostile to Hitler, who expressed their complete incomprehension and disgust at the assassination attempt, rather suggests that an attempted arrest would have led to a scandal.

Ultimately, we will never find out what would have really happened in this case: 'End of War in the West' or civil war. At that time, SS Reichsführer Heinrich HIMMLER , under the code name "Königgrätz", was also planning to have HITLER eliminated and to conclude a separate peace with the Soviets.<sup>2</sup> An arrest or elimination of HITLER by opposition Wehrmacht officers would have fitted HIMMLER's concept almost ideally , only to pose as the nation's savior from civil war afterwards.

<sup>1</sup> Otto Ernst REMER,  
*Conspiracy and Treason  
about Hitler*, Remer Heipke,  
Bad Kissingen 1993, p. 134 f.

<sup>2</sup> Gregory DOUGLAS,  
*Gestapo Chief. The 1948  
Interrogation of Heinrich  
Müller*, Vol. 1, Bender  
1995, pp. 167 ff. and 175.

## **Waiting for the second invasion or: the sabotage of the Invasion front by the department "Foreign Armies West" of the OK**

In the first days of July, ROMMEL raged against the OKW: "They can't expect me to hold out with a fourth division when three American divisions attack!"

Actually they were in the west

enough German troops and material, the majority of which had to remain idle at this time!

Thus, on June 30, 1944, after the fall of Cherbourg, between Caen and Scheldte alone, more German divisions lay idle in their quarters than were deployed on the invasion front against the enemy. At this point, 25 American and English divisions were on the French mainland, with 15 more awaiting embarkation in England.

On the German side there were 48 infantry divisions in France, 38 of which were deployed along the long Atlantic coast, so 10 were still available even if they didn't want to strip the Pas-de-Calais of troops.

Demonstrably enough Panzer and Panzergrenadier divisions were already ready for action on the day of the invasion of France. Of these units, ROMMEL initially controlled only 4 formations: the 2nd Panzer Division (Abbeville), the 21st Panzer Division (behind the landing front), the 116th Panzer Division (east of Rouen) and the 12th SS Panzer Division ›Hitlerjugend‹ (Caen).

Three more armored divisions as an intervention reserve were subordinate to the OKW: the 1st SS Panzer Division ›Adolf Hitler‹ (Beverloo Belgium), the Panzer Lehr Division (Le Mans-Orne-Chartres) and the 17th SS Panzergrenadier Division ›Götz von Berlichingen‹ (Cotieux). Three other Panzer Divisions were stationed in southern France: the 11th Panzer Division (Bordeaux), the 2nd SS Panzer Division Das Reich (Montauban-Toulouse) and the 9th Panzer Division (Avignon-Nîmes-Arles).

Later the 9th and 10th SS Panzer Divisions were brought in from the east.

The tragic Normandy effect then set in, for from the outset the German reserves were used after the Allied landings as if the German leadership had forgotten how to wage war after six years of war. Thus the German countermeasures against the landings were still carried out within the framework of regiments, battalions and combat groups, and when reserve divisions intervened in the fighting only parts of them were at the front.

No one has questioned whether this was due to 'coincidence' or whether there was a method behind the system.

The parts of the German Wehrmacht, which were deployed so poorly and in such a haphazard manner, did exceptionally well beyond all expectations, but the Allies were always in the majority thanks to their focus and because of the German strategy of temporary workers. In this unequal struggle, the German defensive positions,

the small intervention reserves and the combat groups rubbed off bit by bit. - despite the most successful resistance, which in some places brought the Allied opponent to the brink of defeat.

In fact, in the summer of 1944 something almost unique in the history of the war took place: the German reserves in the immediate vicinity were not deployed for weeks, even months. Thus of the twelve armored divisions in the west only three were at first in action, and ten infantry divisions were still available. If necessary, another thirty divisions could be drawn from the unattacked coastal positions.

Their non-use in the first weeks of the invasion battle went down in the history of the Second World War as one of the great German 'mistakes'.

Up until the end of July 1944, HITLER, the OKW and the German commanders-in-chief in France were afraid that the landing in Normandy would be followed by a second, even larger landing in Pas-de-Calais. In fact, this was largely due to the "Foreign Armies West" department of the Army High Command, led by Colonel LG. Alexis Freiherr VON ROENNE and his associate, Lieutenant Colonel Roger MICHEL. From December 1943 to the end of July 1944 they systematically ensured that the actually more than sufficient forces of the German defense against the invasion were misdirected until the Allied breakthrough was achieved.<sup>1, 2</sup> In fact, HITLER was at the conference on 17 June in Margival still of the opinion that the main landing had already occurred.

<sup>1</sup> Paul CARRELL, *they are coming! The invasion of 1944*, Ullstein, Berlin, 1979, pp. 267-270.

<sup>2</sup> Otto Ernst REMER, *Hitler conspiracy and treason*, Remer Heipke, Bad Kissingen 1993, pp. 113-118.

However, he opposed the rigid view of ROMMEL and VON RUND STEDT, who considered the Normandy landings to be a sham invasion. Both marshals refused to transfer reinforcements from 15th Army at the Pas-de-Calais to 7th Army on the Calvados coast. As the minutes of the meeting clearly confirmed, HITLER pointed out that "the very best divisions in the Norman bridgehead that have already been identified and, based on his experience, a second landing should not be expected." "For that reason alone" was listed in the minutes as HITLER's wording. This suggested other reasons. Three-fourths of the airborne divisions that could be identified in England had been recognised, the best Allied attack troops and almost all of MONTGOMERY's 8th Army. It was out of the question that the enemy would hold a mock maneuver with these formations.

Of the twelve armored divisions in the west, only three were initially in combat, and German reserves were not deployed for months. As a result, the deployed divisions lamented great casualties: At the end of the Normandy battle, "Das Reich" still consisted of 450 men and 25 tanks, the "Hitler Jugend" had only 300 men, 10 tanks and no more artillery. Here in the background: 3 destroyed German tanks. From: Christopher AILSBY, *The History of the Waffen SS*, Tosa, Vienna 1999.



Furthermore, the German side had found the revealing operational orders of the American VII Corps. Nevertheless, HITLER did not prevail against his field marshals, because in the meantime he himself had begun to doubt whether it had really been the main Allied landing.

Initially, HITLER did not allow himself to be deceived. From the nature of the landing preparations, he had discovered early on both the location of the invasion and, as he said on April 6, 1944, had described the Allied deception maneuvers in south-east England as "outrageous theatre".

Although the reports about the main landing that had already started were unequivocal, HITLER now allowed himself to be influenced more and more by the agonizing possibility of a second landing. He had blindly trusted Colonel Freiherr Alexis VON ROENNE, the group leader of the OKH department 'Foreign Armies West'. VON ROENNE HITLER had already given correct reports several times before. In 1939 he correctly predicted that the western powers would not be active on the western front when attacking Poland, in 1940 he predicted the success of the attack across the Ardennes, and in 1944 he reported that the great invasion was not taking place in the Balkans but in France would play. Colonel Freiherr VON ROENNE already had HITLER three times

Truth be told, why should he doubt the fourth time? This was exactly what became HITLER's undoing, because in the meantime VON ROENNE had switched to the conspirators' camp. Nothing is known about the circumstances of how this happened. At the end of 1943, other conspirators foisted on him Lieutenant Colonel Roger MICHEL as head of the 'Group England'. In the post-war period it was claimed that he was in Allied service, and after his early release from captivity he was seen in an American uniform. MICHEL explained at the time that he belonged to the American intelligence service CIC. He later disappeared behind the Iron Curtain. Had he also betrayed his next employer?

According to statements by German General Staff officers who had been taken prisoner of war, the "Foreign Armies West" department had been falsifying the situation map for HITLER since the fall of 1943 and tricking 32 divisions into it. The alleged purpose: HITLER's Reich Security Service influenced HITLER with overly optimistic reports about the enemy situation, and in order to react to this understatement the trick of exaggeration was used. The protective claim was that in this way HITLER would take the middle ground between under-exaggeration as truth and thus arrive at a true estimate of Allied strength in the West. This was unsuccessful, HITLER reported the strength of the Allies in the West unvarnished and uncorrected, and when the invasion began, the General Staff Department "Foreign Armies West" was no longer able to get rid of the 32 divisions they had invented.

As we will see later, this account is not correct, but is only a protective claim, because at the end of May, i.e. one week before the landing, ROENNE's numbers were once again sensationally increased: According to this, the Allies in England now had 87 divisions stand, including 8 airborne divisions. In truth, however, only 37 divisions were ready to land. A whole army group too many!

So there can be no question of the Foreign Armies West department trying to slowly correct the original, excessively high number of registrations, but rather increasing them considerably! In fact, the OKW war diary of May 22, 1944 reported: "70 to 80 formations were accepted on the other side, and there was a relatively clear picture of their structure and accommodation." In fact, after the successful landing, VON ROENNE behaved at decisive moments keep it up as if it comes down to it

would go to ensure a success of the Allied landings. On June 9, 1944, at around 11:05 a.m., he reported from Paris to Colonel KRUMMACHER from the Wehrmacht High Command: "A radio message intended for the Belgian resistance had just been intercepted. It indicated an enemy landing, probably planned for June 10, 1944 in Belgium. It would therefore be suicidal madness to send our infantry and tanks from the Pas-de-Calais area and Belgium at this very moment to reinforce the Normandy front." It was precisely this that General EISENHOWER's aides were able to prevent! HITLER then also ordered the advance of immediately available tank and infantry divisions of the 15th Army across the Seine to be halted. He sent them back to their previous locations. to protect the Calais area against the threat of a second landing.

A day later, ROENNE reported to the Fuhrer's headquarters that, according to the latest reports from the agent "Brutus" (an English double agent), a new landing was imminent.

Trusting in VON ROENNE, HITLER issued the highest alert for the entire coastal defense from the Seine to the Scheldt.

He even declared that the 15th Army had to be reinforced and that the Panzer Infantry Division should not be transferred to Normandy from the Pas-de-Calais!<sup>1</sup>

As long as it was possible, the Foreign Army West tried to convince the German High Command that a second landing was likely. The German Schnellboote received the following telex on July 2, 1944: "OB West gives the following advance warning: 'Enemy statements, as in the preparation for the invasion of July 6, June increased noticeably on July 1st. Content suggests new invasion in the next few days. Greatest attention, preparation of all security measures such as ground, especially since the attacking front does not emerge from enemy verdicts.'" The game of deception continued undisturbed. In the case of the Schnellboote, this false warning meant that from then until mid-July most of the naval mines that the Allies could not clear were laid in the Dieppe-Somme area and off the Scheide estuary, where they could not cause any damage.<sup>2, 3</sup>

In addition, before the Allied landings in Normandy began, Colonel VON ROENNE was authorized to contact the Allied High Command in order to Landing of troops to support the Allies and enable them to advance rapidly across western and central Europe

<sup>1</sup> Janusz PIEKALKIEWICZ, *Invasion. France 1944*, Southwest, Munich 1979, p. 145 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Heinz GUDERIAN, *Memories of a Soldier*, Motor book, Stuttgart 1961/1998.

<sup>3</sup> David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 162.

before the Russians got there,<sup>1</sup> in view of the secret service options available to him, getting in touch with the Western Allies must have been a trifle for VON ROENNE .

1 Valentin FAUN, *Second Front. The conflicts of interest of the anti-Hitler coalition*, Knaur, Munich 1997, p. 42.

After the failed assassination attempt on July 20, Freiherr VON ROENNE arrested and later executed as a conspirator.

The sabotage-like exaggerations of the “Foreign Heere West” department during the Normandy invasion were later to have disastrous consequences for German warfare: by the end of 1944 it was clear that the Russians were preparing a major offensive on the Eastern Front. At the same time, however, the last major offensive of the German army in the west was taking place in the west with the Ardennes offensive. When on December 24, 1944 and on January 9, 1945, the then Chief of Staff Heinz GUDERIAN HITLER , with the help of accurate and accurate analyzes of the department ›Foreign Armies East‹ (General GEHLEN) , asked for reinforcement of the Eastern Front at the expense of the Western Army, HITLER refused “Foreign Heere Ost” estimate of the looming gigantic Russian winter offensive. Instead, he called them pipe dreams, exaggerations, and the biggest bluff since Genghiskan.

HITLER had been deceived by VON ROENNE in the summer of 1944 , and now he feared the same maneuver might be repeated . So he omitted the timely transfer of further reserves to the Eastern Front. The major Russian attack on January 13, 1945 then led – as GEHLEN correctly predicted – to the collapse of the eastern front and allowed STALIN's tanks to advance to the Oder.

Long after his death , the sabotage of the anti-Soviet Colonel von Roenne helped his enemy in the East, whom he hated, achieve a great victory.

However , Colonel VON ROENNE's Foreign Army West department worked with other high-ranking personalities to maintain the fiction of a second Allied landing. This also included officers of the Luftwaffe. Some of them managed to remain unrecognized.

### **The Truth from the Air Part 1; Special Operation West” – the high-speed reconnaissance planes don’t start!**

It was only at the beginning of August 1944 that the German High Command finally realized that the Normandy invasion had already been the main landing and that there was no reason to fear any further landings in the Pas-de-Calais. How came

one to this far too late realization? In the spring of 1944, one of the most important German problems was ensuring adequate aerial reconnaissance of the British invasion ports. The difficulty at that time was that the English air defenses were already so strong that the chances of a conventional Luftwaffe reconnaissance aircraft (Me 410, Ju 88/188) successfully carrying out such a reconnaissance mission could only be guaranteed by a lucky coincidence. Even with relatively fast machines like the Arado Ar 240 it was not possible to get reliable information about the Allied deployment in southern England. In fact, on May 19, a German reconnaissance aircraft managed to penetrate and overfly the western part of England for the last time. On May 24, 1944, a machine from the IX. Flieger-Korps took some aerial photos of the ports of Bournemouth, Poole, Portland, Weymouth and Folkestone-Dover and of the estuaries and foreshore in that area in a fast flyby. These were said to be the last aerial photographs available to the German High Command before the invasion began.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Janusz PIEKALKIEWICZ, *Invasion. France 1944*, Southwest, Munich 1979, p. 114 f.

After the Allied landing, the total Allied air supremacy then prevented the German piston-engined aircraft from conducting reconnaissance flights over the bridgehead.

Germany's high technology offered a way out in good time!

Captain Cornelius NOELL, chief of the I./Vers. On May 23, 1944, the ObdL (German Air Force Commander-in-Chief Experimental Association), the Luftwaffe's secret experimental unit, advised using the new jet aircraft for long-range reconnaissance flights in the West. He specifically suggested using the two prototypes V-5 and V-7 of the Arado Ar 234 jet aircraft. NOELL said: "It was the ideal reconnaissance aircraft." A short time later, HITLER personally intervened and allowed the use of the Ar 234 jet bomber as a fast reconnaissance aircraft.

Now everything happened very quickly: By the end of May 1944, the two Ar 234 V-5 and V-7 prototypes, which were actually still supposed to be used for engine testing in Rechlin, had been withdrawn from the test sites, and by June 1, 1944 it was already flying Ar 234 V-5 at the ObdL experimental unit after two RB-50/30 cameras had been installed in the rear fuselage in Brandenburg.

On the 29th day! In 1944 the suitability of the Ar 234 as a long-range reconnaissance aircraft was clearly demonstrated. The previously calculated power values



even slightly surpassed.<sup>1</sup> At this time the majority of the German divisions in France were still lying in forced inactivity as reserves against a feared second invasion. Nozzle photo reconnaissance could have brought clarity here.

<sup>1</sup> Manfred GRIEHL, Jet plane  
*Arado Ar 234 "Blitz"*,  
Motorbuch, Stuttgart 2003, pp.  
87-93.

They were there but weren't allowed to come. An unbelievable process!

Although the commander, Horst GÖTZ, reported his small unit ready for action at the end of June, he did not receive any orders and the operational jet planes remained idle on the ground for weeks. Horst GÖTZ reported in the post-war period: 'Nothing happened because traitors in the highest leadership positions did not want the invasion to be disrupted. On July 17th we received permission (not the orders!) to move to Juvincourt on the Normandy front. «2-4 After a break of almost four weeks, on July 20th, 1944 the command attempted to move its ground units from Oranienburg to Juvincourt near Reims embarrassed. Prior to this, the air transport of the launch equipment required for the machines (hydraulic lifting equipment, launch vehicle, etc.) had been successfully practiced using a three-engine Junkers Ju 352 transport aircraft (registration T-9 + AB). "Strangely enough," the air transport of the equipment that was absolutely necessary for operations was now expressly forbidden, and rail transport was ordered instead. It had to be clear to everyone that, given the chaotic railway conditions prevailing in the West at the time, this would result in a considerable time delay in transporting the equipment and thus also in its use. GÖTZ said: »The saboteurs or idiots were again successful at work.«

<sup>2</sup> Jeffrey ETHELL and Alfred PRICE, *The German jets in Combat*, London  
1979, p. 83 f.

<sup>3</sup> J. Richard SMITH, Eddie J. CREEK and Thomas HITCHCOCK, *Dornier 335 Arrow*, Monogram 1997, p. 57 ff.

<sup>4</sup> J. Richard SMITH et al. Eddie CREEK, *Arado 234 Blitz*, Monogram 1992, pp. 147-151.

So it came as it had to: When Oberleutnant Erich SOMMER arrived in Juvincourt with the Ar 234 V-7 on July 21, 1944, the revolutionary jet reconnaissance aircraft had to be transported immediately after landing with a low loader in one. be parked in the hangar, since there was initially no launch car available there. Only after a further one-week delay did only one of the two wagons loaded with special equipment finally arrive at the new site in Reims. The other had been hit by Allied fighter-bombers on the rail. Thus, the first use of an Ar 234 reconnaissance machine could only take place on 2 April 1941.

August 1944. At that time, the Allies were already in full swing of the heavy breakthrough battles that were to trigger the collapse of the Normandy front.

First Lieutenant Erich SOMMER managed to get off the ground with ease using booster rockets and a launch vehicle. He climbed up to 10500 m at 740 km/h, fo

mapped the entire landing area around Cherbourg and returned undamaged to the base after a flight time of around 1.3 hours with 83 continuous shots. Immediately after landing, specialists rushed in to forward the valuable photo load to the evaluation. In less than 90 minutes, Erich SOMMER photographed almost the entire Allied bridgehead in Normandy. The 380 photos he brought back caused a great deal of excitement on the German side: working day and night, it took a 12-man team of photo evaluators more than two days to make a preliminary assessment of what the Ar 234 photographs revealed : The Allies had landed more than a million and a half men and over 300,000 vehicles in France. This was the invasion! A detailed review of the photos took a few weeks.

The A rado Ar 234 A jet plane had already been proposed as a “lightning reconnaissance aircraft” on July 13, 1943. The use of the existing 2 prototypes was delayed for many weeks by high German Air Force authorities.

On August 2, Lieutenant Horst GÖTZ finally arrived with the Ar 234 V-5, and the Ju 352 T-9 + AB was finally allowed to complete supply flights to Juvin court. They went without any problems.

Between August 3 and 27, 1944, the Ar 234 V-5 and V-7 made a total of 13 reconnaissance flights over Normandy, the Thames and Hull Estuaries and over southern England. It was now also clear that there was no second landing fleet in England threatening the Pas-de-Calais. This realization came too late!

Reifurfabbeilung

13.7.1943

1

2

3

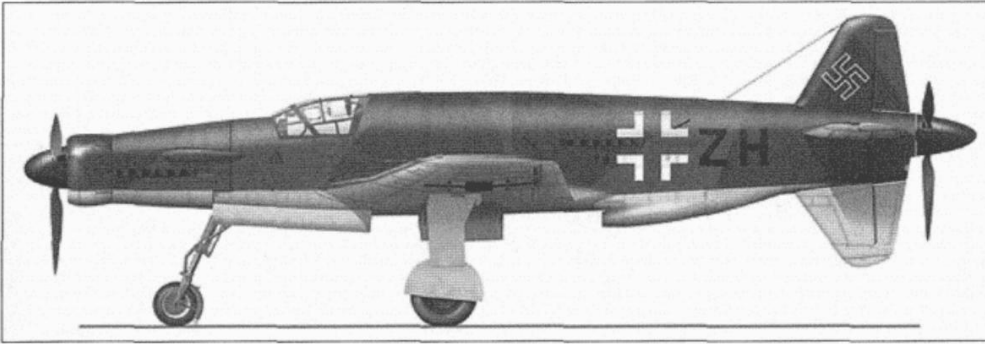
4

5

Anforderer

Ar 234-A  
2x Ju 109004 A

Pos.	Rb.-Anlage	Pos.	Panzerchutz	Pos.	Nach dem Start abszuwerfen:
1	Wahlweise: 2x Rb 75/30 2x Rb 50/30 1x Rb 75/30 + 1x Rb 20/30 1x Rb 50/30 + 1x Rb 20/30	2	Panzerplatte 15 mm	4	Startwagen
		3	Zusätzlicher Schutz durch SG-Behälter	5	2x R-Geräte R I 202 b (von Fa. Walter-Kiel)



The unconventional two-engine piston engine Dornier Do 335 would also have been suitable for use on the canal with its long range and a top speed approaching that of jet aircraft. Most of the literature also states that the experimental association ObdL also has an experimental machine from the

type Dornier Do 335. Like the two Ar 234 jet aircraft, the third prototype of the Do 335 high-performance piston engine combat aircraft was converted for England reconnaissance and handed over to the 1st experimental association ObdL in good time. With the registration T9 + ZH, the aircraft with the pilot Lieutenant Wolfgang ZIESE was to fly air reconnaissance over the British Isles.

Because of rear engine overheating and undercarriage problem men<sup>1</sup> but it never flew over England or Normandy.

Here, too, something is wrong, because in fact not one, but two Do 335s, the VI and V-3, were converted with an Rb 50/18 camera in the bomb bay and delivered to the ObdL test unit for anti-invasion purposes. The first of the machines then arrived at the unit in June 1944, and its provisional permission to fly for a western mission is dated June 8, 1944. That would have been in time to clarify whether the landing in Normandy was the main landing .

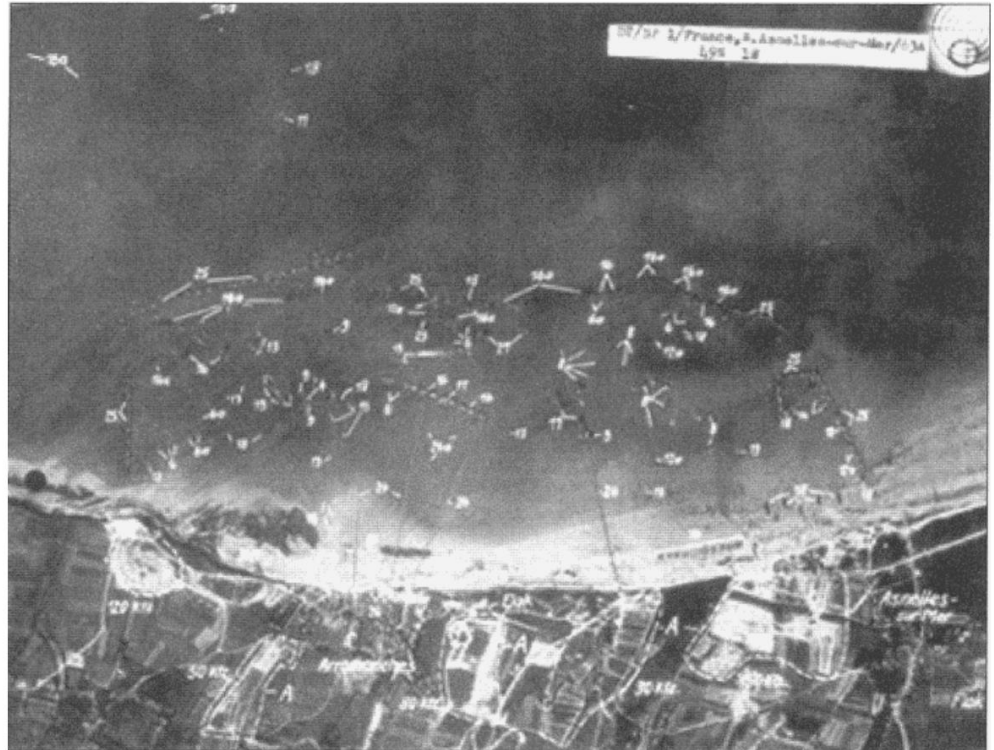
But, oh wonder, the two Do 335s were also never used over Normandy and England due to technical defects (undercarriage weakness, engine overheating), although in June 1944 at least one aircraft was reported to be ready to fly for weeks. In September, the VI and V-3 were sent back to the manufacturer. Whether that was really all is doubtful, there are indications that some material about the Do 335 has been withheld by the former Allies to this day. The reasons are still classified as secret.

The fact is that the reconnaissance flights of the high-performance Ar 234 (and Do 335?) aircraft took place much too late to be of operational importance

The Dornier Do 335 piston engine reconnaissance aircraft, which can travel at almost 800 km/h, was never used over the The two existing machines would have been particularly suitable for reconnaissance of the British invasion ports.

<sup>1</sup> Manfred GRIEHL,  
*Dornier Do 335, 435,*  
635, Motorbuch,  
Stuttgart 2003, pp. 78

End of the 'deception manoeuvre': aerial photographs such as that of the artificial 'Mulberry' harbor at Asnelles-sur-Mer, taken on August 2, 1944 during E. SOMMER's flight in the Ar 234 jet reconnaissance aircraft, exposed the truth that the Normandy invasion was the main landing. Targeted delays by high-ranking German circles lasting weeks had ensured that the Ar 234s only took off



could than the military decisions in the Battle of France

had already fallen.

(Source: USAF

Luftwaffe captured photo)

to be of importance in repelling the invasion. Their earlier use would have been possible. Every day gained in time would have been of crucial importance.

This also applied to the last attempt to turn things around again in the Battle of Normandy, because in the first week of August not only did the Allies start heavy breakthrough battles, but the German counterattack from Mortain/Avranches also failed. Thanks to their ultra-radio reconnaissance, the Allies were well aware of the German attack plans in advance and deployed their troops in great haste according to the German attack plans that had been revealed to them. A timely German photo reconnaissance would have discovered this, and since the Allied commanders had to leave large gaps in their defensive positions, these could have been exploited in a counterattack - if only the Germans had known about them beforehand.

When the findings of the Arado reconnaissance aircraft were finally available, it was too late to be able to respond with appropriate operational answers. The German counterattack ran into the set trap!

Erich SOMMER reported in the post-war period that after the first successful deployment, numerous high-ranking officers went to Juvincourt

came and wanted to see the miracle plane. But SOMMER remembered that the whole thing was kept very secret and the officers were not allowed near. Perhaps this saved the life of the "Kommando GÖTZ". It is known that throughout the Battle of France the presence of Arado 234 in Juvincourt remained unknown to the Allied secret services.

## **Part 2: Why London was not allowed to be photographed in the summer of 1944**

It was also possible to determine how HITLER 's deception about the alleged effectiveness of the V-1 against London could be maintained for so long. With the Arado Ar 234, the Germans had a superior jet reconnaissance aircraft available from June 1944 that could photograph Allied airspace with immunity.

From August 2, 1944, the two prototypes Ar 234 V-5 (Horst GÖTZ) and V-7 (Erich SOMMER) flew regular missions over the British Isles. They revealed that the alleged Allied landing fleet in the Kent area was just a ruse and that there was no threat of a second Allied landing in France.

However, the 'GÖTZ' command did not have permission from Luftwaffe Command West, as the former Air Fleet 3 was called after it moved from France to Limburg, to carry out reconnaissance via London. On September 10, 1944, however, Erich SOMMER extended a reconnaissance flight over the Thames to London on his own initiative.<sup>1</sup>

The next morning, just as he was about to depart on a new reconnaissance mission to the Wash area of eastern England, he was called from Luftwaffe Command West in Limburg, where an excited voice informed him that he had exceeded his authority filming London. Someone high up was upset about it, and a 'blood judge' was already on his way to court-martial him.

SOMMER reported that he immediately received his Kame

<sup>1</sup> J.Richard SMITH, Eddie J. CREEKn & Peter PETRICK, *On Specials Missions. The Luftwaffe's Research and Experimental Squadrons 1923-1945*, Classic-books 2003, pp. 59 and 61.

Horst GOTZ and  
Erich SOMMER.



raden Horst GÖTZ called in Oranienburg to find out who was behind all this. With his face bandaged, GÖTZ immediately went to Berlin, where he met Minister of Propaganda Dr. GOEBBELS tried to meet. GÖTZ was received at the Ministry of Propaganda by his assistant, who took his official complaint.

In the meantime, GÖTZ was also from Luftwaffe Command West threatened with a court-martial.

When Erich SOMMER returned to his unit the following day, a little anxious, a telegram from the Luftwaffe command staff was already available. After that, the London footage would be sent directly to them, and not to Luftwaffe Command West as before. In addition, all of London was to be systematically recorded from now on. The court-martial councils were recalled, the charges dropped, and everything seemed to be returning to normal.

Long after the war, Horst GÖTZ tried to find out who the enemy was who had asked for their heads. After that, the head of the West Air Force, General PANITZKI, told him the story from his point of view one day at a chance meeting. According to PANITZKI, SS Obergruppenführer Dr. Hans KAMMLER, who was, among other things, head of the V-2 programs during the Second World War. In this way, this man tried to prevent any information about the failure of his V-2 program from reaching HITLER's ears. PANITZKI concluded that at that time the West Air Fleet was "very concerned" about the "GÖTZ" commando.

However, General PANITZKI'S story cannot be true, because the first V-2 was not launched against London until September 3, 1944, just a week before Horst GÖTZ flew over England's capital. Also, when London photography was banned, KAMMLER had no control over the VI and V-2. It was only on September 2nd that HITLER gave him command of the V-2, and on September 9th, i.e. the day before the Ar 234 photo flight over London, it was then officially confirmed that KAMMLER was in command of the V-2/Army Corps LXV had. The VI did not get the SS under their control until 1945, i.e. much later.

It is therefore completely nonsensical to claim that KAMMLER had the aerial photographs of London prohibited in order to prevent assessment of a weapon which was not yet under his command. On the contrary, it would have been more in KAMMLER'S interest to prove the failure of those previously responsible by means of revealing aerial photographs.

sen, in order to get the long-awaited operational force into their own hands more quickly.

Who then issued the order that actually existed, and who sent the court-martial councilors to try Horst GÖTZ and Erich SOMMER? Again, the answer is clear.

Until September 1944, the VI had flown massive missions against England and caused major damage to property and people there. The aerial bombings in the English metropolis led to large indirect losses for the economy as a result of countless lost working hours or the non-appearance of workers at their production sites. However, the elimination of the city, as HITLER expected based on the optimistic reports from those around him, was nowhere near achieved.

So those responsible in the Luftwaffe could only be concerned with deceiving HITLER and the German High Command by banning jet reconnaissance flights about the unsuccessful elimination of London by the VI of the Luftwaffe.

The benefit of these actions, which can only be described as 'sabotage', is obvious: the prevention of subsequent corrections by the VI and, above all, avoidance of their target change to the invasion ports or the Allied bridgehead in Normandy. The V-2 played no role in this, as it was not used until much later.

In fact, what the Allies most feared was a possible VI target swap against military targets on the Normandy front.

Although the morale of Allied soldiers in the landing battle was dampened by a drop in production in London and mass evacuations, this had no effect on the decisive battle for the Allied bridgehead.<sup>1</sup> Despite the inaccuracy of the flying bomb, its use against the overcrowded landing beaches with their countless munitions would have - and fuel depots must lead to unforeseeable consequences. Was this what high-ranking German circles wanted to prevent by banning photo flights over the English capital?

1 Friedrich GEORG, *Hitler's Victory Weapons*, Vol. 2: *Star wars 1947*, Part A: From the V-1 to A-9: Unconventional short- and medium-range weapons, A mun, Schleusingen 2003, pp. 30-33

Thus, on June 26, 1944, parts of the 3rd and 4th departments of Colonel WACHTEL's aerial bomb regiment had made a change of target on their own and took their catapults to the embarkation port of Southampton in order to severely disrupt the invasion supplies. Colonel WACHTEL had decided to attack Southampton secretly and only report to Fuhrer Headquarters

1 Wilhelm HELLMOLD,  
*The V-1. A documentation,*  
 Bechtle, Esslingen-  
 Munich 1988, p. 228.

if the surprise attack had been successful. But no sooner had they sent their first aerial bombs across the Channel to Southampton than a telex came in the following day in the name of the Commander-in-Chief West, saying that their own fire on "secondary targets" was to be stopped immediately and directed exclusively at the main target, London.<sup>1</sup> OB West did not hesitate to refer to a "Fuhrer order" to prevent Colonel WACHTEL from continuing to shoot at Southampton on his own. The strikingly rapid intervention by OB West to prevent the shelling of Southampton with V-1s from being successful has never been questioned, although OB West personally heard from HITLER in Margival on June 17 that V-1s would be used against bridgeheads and ports of invasion had demanded. Did the "usual illegible signature" appear here again under the hiring order "in the name of OB West"? guesswork arises. In fact, the one-off bombardment of the supply port of Southampton on June 26, 1944 had led to some Allied troops being moved out of the V 1 area of operation. From June 27, only London was allowed to be shelled

2 Wolfgang  
 GÜCKELHORN and

Detlev PAUL, *V-1*  
*-Eifelschreck*, Helios 2005, p. 38.

So another threat to the Normandy invasion was averted until it was too late to take countermeasures.

Only III./KG3, operating from Holland, succeeded in launching He 111s from the air against Southampton in spite of the OKW order in July 1944.<sup>90</sup> Fi 103, before higher orders had to concentrate exclusively on London again.

The events surrounding the ban on reconnaissance flights over London are one of the indications that even after the assassination attempt of July 20, 1944 had failed, conspiracy groups, reaching into the highest circles, continued to be active and asserted their interests even beyond the use of courts-martial.

### **Part 3: The solution?**

#### **The scout general was a conspirator**

Colonel General Heinz GUDERIAN did not disclose in his post-war memoirs who the Luftwaffe general he knew was who, shortly before the attack on Adolf HITLER on July 20, 1944, informed him that Field Marshal VON KLUGE was preparing the capitulation in France in the West (we will go into this later).



However, the historian David IRVING<sup>1</sup> managed to find out that this Luftwaffe general was Major General Karl BAR SEWISCH .

Major General BARSEWISCH belonged to the group of high-ranking German resistance officers who survived the turmoil of July 20, 1944 unscathed. On the contrary, he remained general of the reconnaissance officers until the end of the war and thus decided on the use and equipment of the German Air Force's reconnaissance aircraft until the end

We remember the tricky administrative delays that prevented an earlier deployment of the Arado Ar 234 jet reconnaissance aircraft over Normandy for weeks, as well as the ban on photographing the London area. Now the alleged failure of the German air reconnaissance before the landing in the Norman die can be explained!

<sup>1</sup> David IRVING, *Schlacht um Europa, With the courage of desperation against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> General BARSEWISCH also delayed the deployment of the "America bomber" Me 264 and the 'Atlantic enlighteners'.





## Chapter 9

**Failed shortly before the goal  
or: how 'General Eisenhower's  
helpers' wanted to dissolve the front**

After the fall of Caen (pictured above, July 19, 1944), EISENHOWER's German helpers thought they had reached their goal.

However, after the failed assassination attempt on July 20, the Allies changed their attitude towards the resistance.

## Section 1: Rommel's plan - a war hero is crushed between Hitler and the generals

It is clear from post-war documents that from the spring of 1944 there were unrecorded confidential hints about ROMMEL's armistice plans in every meeting between ROMMEL and his commanders propose a ceasefire.

1 Kenneth MACKSAY, *Rommel. Battles and Campaigns*, Motorbuch, Stuttgart 1982, p. 271.

ROMMEL's plan was to provide for the evacuation of the occupied western territories, the withdrawal of the western army behind the West Wall, the handing over of the administration of the occupied western territories to the Allies and the immediate cessation of the enemy bombing campaign against the homeland. The truce—not surrender—was to be followed by negotiations for a peace that would point the way to order, not chaos. Field Marshal ROMMEL expected the Allies to give such a chance... The fight was to

be continued in the east. To this end, a shortened eastern front was to be maintained in an approximate line between the mouth of the Danube and the Karpaten-Lviv-Vistula-Memel river, as well as the immediate evacuation of the fortresses. According to post-war information from SPEIDEL, Field Marshal ROMMEL had intended for the negotiations with the Western Allies : General of the Infantry Karl Heinrich STÜLPNAGEL, General of the Panzer Troops Freiherr Leo GEYR VON SCHWEPPENBURG (a fierce opponent of the National Socialists, but who categorically refused to join any conspiracy ), Lieutenant General Hans SPEIDEL, Lieutenant General Count Gerd VON SCHWERIN (head of the 116th Panzer Division, which was held back until July 19, 1944 for the putsch against HITLER ), Vice Admiral Friedrich RUGE (confidant of ROMMEL) and Lieutenant Colonel d. R. Caesar BY HOFACKER. According to SPEIDEL, ROMMEL attached importance to speeding up the preparations so that action could be taken before the invasion began.<sup>2-4</sup> A firmly established western front was a prerequisite for all negotiations that became necessary. In SPEIDEL 's words, "therefore everyone's constant

concern" was directed at her. However, SPEIDEL understood this to mean something different than Field Marshal ROMMEL.

2 Hans SPEIDEL, *Invasion 1944. A contribution to Rome and the fate of the Reich*, Rainer Wunderlich, Tübingen 1949, p. 77-93

3 Valentin FAUN, *Second Front. The Conflicts of Interest of the Anti-Hitler Coalition*, Knauer, Munich 1997, p. 431 f.

4 David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p. 175 f

However, the Allies did not respond to ROMMEL's request. According to information provided by conspirators on July 20th, ROMMEL is said to later become the Kapi

tulation of the western army. Allegedly, Caesar VON HOFACKER reported, when he returned from a meeting in Paris on the evening of July 9, 1944, that ROMMEL could hardly be stopped and would have preferred to strike straight away. The co-conspirator Freiherr VON TEUCHERT reported: "HOFACKER asked me to get a draft of a letter (from ROMMEL? – note: GEORG) to the Allied headquarters immediately. It was to announce an intention to cease hostilities on one's own initiative, contain no conditions, seek only in the form of a request for honorable treatment after surrender, and also for secrecy until the opportunity for execution had arisen.

The letter was completed that same evening – excellently formulated by BARGATZKI.<sup>1</sup> However, it is now doubtful to what extent ROMMEL was involved in July 20th. The sources for this mostly come from people directly involved in the attack, such as SPEIDEL. It is also nowhere proven that ROMMEL really wanted to capitulate before the start of the landing in the west.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from: Otto Ernst REMER, *Conspiracy and Treason about Hitler*, Remer Heipke, Bad Kissingen, 51993, p. 135.

It is probably true that ROMMEL, in his discussions with the field commanders in the west, examined the possibility of a ceasefire after a successful landing in the west in order to prevent the western front from collapsing. He wanted to negotiate this in talks with his opponent

MONTGOMERY from marshal to marshal. It was also to be done without HITLER's consent, although he hoped that HITLER would subsequently agree to it, as he did in North Africa in 1942. This had nothing to do with a putsch or a coup d'etat. According to Gestapo chief General Heinrich MÜLLER in 1948, ROMMEL had no part in July 20, 1944. He did not even know about the planned attack and, according to the Gestapo's final analysis, was loyal to HITLER.

However, according to General EBERBACH, ROMMEL also wanted to not rule out the elimination of HITLER.<sup>2</sup>

ROMMEL obviously wanted his own 'Western solution', but without his active participation the conspirators' plans were in great danger of failing. An uprising by General EL SENHOWER's helpers against ROMMEL and the officers in the Wehrmacht and SS who were loyal to him in France was doomed to failure from the outset. However, it was no longer possible to wait any longer, since the Gestapo in Berlin was already hot on the trail of the conspiracy and had already made the first arrests of those who knew about it. Then came a 'He

<sup>2</sup> Sönke NEITZEL, *Abgriff*, Propyläen, Berlin 2006, p. 137.

"event" in between, which helped the conspirators out of their dilemma: On July 16, seriously injured by a "Spitfire" while driving at the front, Field Marshal ROMMEL was absent from further events.

When the badly injured ROMMEL was in a hospital near Paris

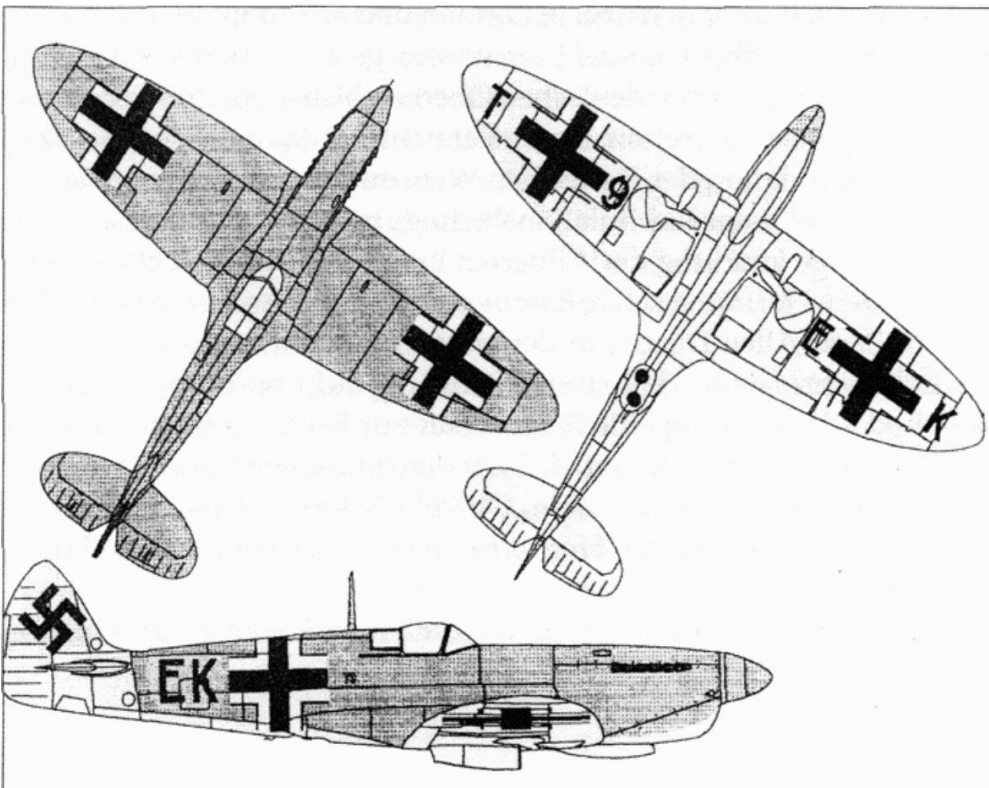
Upon learning of Colonel VON STAUFFENBERG 's assassination attempt on HITLER , he expressed his surprise and horror "that an attempt had been made to kill HITLER , which was very different from putting pressure on him to ask for peace."

In the end, the 16 July fighter-bomber attack by two planes from the RAF's 602 Squadron or the German KG 200 saved General EISEN HOWER's helpers from premature failure! In fact, English squadron diaries reported on August 1, 1944 that

Aircraft of the 126th and 64th Squadron during an escort flight to Angers saw a German Spitfire and a Bf 109 land in the vicinity shortly before the dogfights began there!<sup>1, 2</sup> If Angers was attacked around July 16, 1944, the second possibility would be even more likely.

After his severe wounding, ROMMEL became the victim of a conspiracy by his many enemies in the OKW: If one believes a publication by the Military

History Research Office,<sup>3</sup> he was accused by testimonies by the conspirators HOFACKER, STÜLP NAGEL and SPEIDEL to the Gestapo "in the sense of complicity" in the assassination attempt of the 20th century July incorrectly charged heavily.



<sup>1</sup> Jerry BREWER, "Captured Spitfire?", in: LEMB, internet page, Feb. 13, 2002 The page has since been deleted by hackers.

<sup>2</sup> In fact, ROMMELS Route to La Roche-Guyon previously known from Sepp DIET RICH's headquarters. The attack of the machines was 'atypical': one machine observed in a circle while the other attacked. The KG 200 owned several 'Beute Spitfire' and the presence of the KG 200 Geschwader Kommodore in France is still a mystery to this day. Also the deadly

The attack on General MARCKS is said to have followed the same pattern earlier, at the end of June (research by Francisco MÁNEZ).

<sup>3</sup> Thomas VOGEL (ed.), *Rebellion of Conscience. Military resistance against Hitler and the NS regime 1933-45*, Mittler, Hamburg 2003, pp. 305 f., 433 and 444.

In 1944 the Luftwaffe had a number of captured Supermarine Spitfires and used them – like the PR Mk XI – for special purposes.

<sup>1</sup> Gregory DOUGLAS, *Gestapo Chief. The 1948 Interrogation of Heinrich Müller*, Vol. 1, R. James Bender 1995, pp. 176-179.

<sup>2</sup> Ralf Georg REUTH, »Das Rommel-Komplott«, in: *Welt am Sonntag*, No. 42, October 17, 2004, p. 68.

According to Gestapo General Heinrich MÜLLER<sup>1, 2</sup>, the "Ehrenhof der Wehrmacht" headed by General GUDERIAN was faced with the choice of whether to save SBEIDEL ROMMEL, and the decision was made in favor of SPEIDEL. The special session that was fateful for ROMMEL took place on October 4, 1944. Only two generals voted against SPEIDEL and thus for ROMMEL, including ROMMEL's former opponent KEITEL.

MÜLLER, who in his own words was kept up-to-date on the details of these events through the Gestapo, reported that "these gentlemen were afraid to bring ROMMEL to Berlin for fear that he might then decide to say something about their Anti -To testify to HITLER friends, so that ROMMEL was asked to kill himself. I know that HITLER was outraged, but at the same time he was very angry and suspicious of his military officers. On the other hand, he needed her urgently«.

Field Marshal ROMMEL, in whose scale of values loyalty to the supreme commander, as revealed in the soldier's oath, and to the country he had served to the point of exhaustion in two world wars, ranked highest, this conspiracy was to take the life of his opponents costs.

### **How General Eisenhower wanted to reach an agreement with Field Marshal Rommel**

William CASEY was Director of the CIA from 1981. During the Second World War he headed the OSS in London and in this position learned the details of General EISENHOWER's failed attempt in the spring of 1944 to reach some sort of arrangement with the German commanders-in-chief in the West. A bloodless landing of the Allies in France was to be achieved in this way, while renouncing the Allied war aim of »total surrender of the German Wehrmacht« and against an assurance of moderate surrender conditions.

EISENHOWER pinned particular hope on ROMMEL, since the OSS chief in Bern, Allen DULLES, had reported to General EISENHOWER in the first half of May that "with reference to opposition groups" the Wehrmacht was ready to end the war, under which Condition that we allow the German generals to hold the Russian front. Although ROMMEL is not involved in the matter, there is hope that he would be ready to help in France«.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> William CASEY, *The secret war against Hitler*, Reynerg Gateway, quoted by: Paul CARRELL, *you are coming! The invasion of 1944*, Ullstein, Berlin 171997.

This means nothing other than that the Americans knew exactly



that the Field Marshal was not one of the conspirators, but that they were informed that ROMMEL no longer considered it sensible to continue fighting in the West.

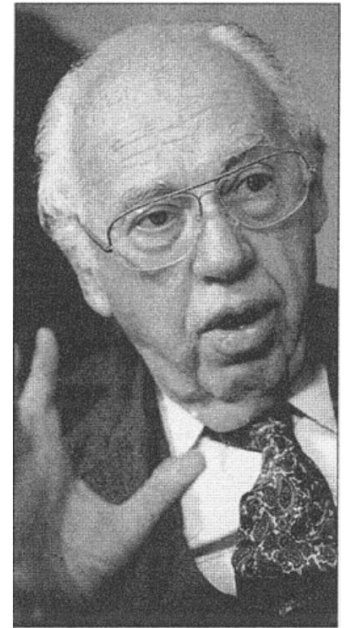
CASEY reported that this plan was also prevented by US President ROOSEVELT, who did not want to deviate from the demand for an "unconditional surrender" by the Germans in the East and West.

But whether this is the whole truth must be questioned. It seems that emissaries from General EISENHOWER tried to contact Field Marshal ROMMEL in May 1944, but tragically failed.

For example, US Colonel SMART was shot down over Vienna on May 10, 1944, and told the Germans during his interrogation that he wanted to get in touch with Field Marshal ROMMEL to end the war independently. Col. SMART may have believed that he could still contact ROMMEL with this statement. Three copies of the interrogation protocol, which was drawn up in the Oberursel/Taunus officers' prison camp, went to Hermann GÖRING, the RLM and Reich Minister of Propaganda GOEBBELS. ROMMEL himself learned nothing about it.<sup>1</sup>

If this is indeed the case, it shows that Colonel SMART's failed mission did not take the easier direct route from England to France, but must have started in the Mediterranean (Italy?). This can only mean that American circles, despite President Franklin Delano ROOSEVELT's opposition, wanted to indirectly contact Field Marshal ROMMEL in order to prevent the expected bloodbath in the West. In order not to be discovered by their own people, the mission started quite harmlessly from another theater of war, the MTO (Mediterranean Theater of Operations). So none of ROOSEVELT's supporters in England would be so quick to think that this secret mission was aimed at establishing contact with the head of Army Group B on the Atlantic Wall.

After General EISENHOWER realized at the end of May 1944 that Col. SMART's attempt to contact Field Marshal ROMMEL must have failed, the General tried to at least have an appeal made, which was broadcast through radio, loudspeakers and leaflets immediately after a successful landing in France when troops should be made known. So the German troops were supposed to surrender through a milder form of capitulation



William CASEY (here as Director of the CIA) cites the significant Work of the US President:

"He [ROOSEVELT] was not ready to declare that he did not intend the German nation to destroy ... HITLER must be defeated without help from internal German opposition."

<sup>1</sup> Hans SPEIDEL, *Invasion 1944. A contribution to Rommels and the Reich Schicksal*, Rainer Wunderlich, Tübingen 51949, S87 f.

to be brought. William CASEY reported that President ROOSEVELT prevented this too. The latter did not even consider it necessary to reply to General EISENHOWER's suggestion.

It was not until July 1944 that direct German-Allied contact was established search across the fronts.

### **"Please report!" The Americans establish radio contact with the German troops**

On July 2, 1944, memorable events took place that are still considered an act of humanity today. In reality, however, there may have been much more behind it.

At 1:50 p.m. that day, a voice, speaking very good German, suddenly reported on a strong American transmitter on the German frequency 2743 kHz and asked to be contacted.<sup>1, 2</sup> The Americans offered to hand over six German nurses who were at fell into American hands after the surrender of Cherbourg. Contact was made in the area of the Panzer Lehr Division at the interface between American and British troops, and the final handover then took place in the area of the 2nd Panzer Division, which was under the command of HITLER opponent Freiherr VON LÜTTWITZ .

The exchange was preceded by radio frequency coordination between the German and American staffs.

This had aroused the great mistrust of HITLER , who did not want to believe that this was only about the exchange of prisoner nurses. In fact, General VON STÜLPNAGEL informed Field Marshal VON KLUGE on the evening of July 20 that the 2.

Panzer Division still in radio contact with the Americans.

In addition, there are a number of oddities surrounding these events to this day. So General SPEIDEL's staff suggested to Field Marshal KLUGE 's high command that a thank you radio message should be sent to the Americans who had sent the eight Red Cross nurses back. The British author David IRVING writes that General SPEIDEL considered having one or the other nurse turn back to take a letter from Field Marshal ROMMEL with him.

Field Marshal VON KLUGE also later demanded to speak to one or the other of the eight Red Cross nurses and urgently sought to find out their whereabouts. It was clear that

1 David IRVING, *Battle for Europe. With the courage of desperation against the invasion of 1944*, DSZ, Munich 2004, S 157 u, 166.

2 Helmut RÜGEN, *West front 1944*, Motorbuch, Stuttgart 2004, pp. 84 and 86.

Marshal VON KLUGE was looking for a postal service with the Allies.

Another surrender then took place at the same location on July 9, during which two nurses and seven staff assistants from Cherbourg were handed over to the Germans. Again silent. immediately on both sides during the surrender of the weapons.

Each time German and American officers conversed during the handover, so that on both occasions there was an opportunity to send messages and letters back and forth.

In fact, shortly after the nurses were released, ROMMEL made an enigmatic remark to Admiral RUGE : "I have to give my name, but I can't do it with my name alone." This indicates that he was writing a letter to the Allies signed, which was to be sent to the Allied High Command in connection with the nurse affair.

The Allies' response to this is still locked away in secret archives.

The "humanitarian release actions" came at a time when Field Marshal ROMMEL and Field Marshal VON KLUGE were planning to dismantle the German western front and when the bomb attack on Adolf HITLER was imminent in Berlin.

Even later, numerous German sea fortresses on the Atlantic coast fell into the hands of the Allies, sometimes after hard fighting, where German nurses were taken prisoner of war in the rush of battle. It is not known, however, that after the conquest of Brest or St. Malo, there were subsequent humanitarian release actions by German nurses or staff assistants in a similar framework to those during the fatefully difficult days of July 1944. This also indicates that that the German-American contact could have been something very special.

### **Field Marshal von Kluge prevents the danger of a civil war in France**

At midnight on July 18, 1944, Field Marshal VON KLUGE ended the danger that a civil war could break out in the West between German troops hostile to Hitler and those pro-Hitler after a putsch.

After the German defensive victory against the English at Caen, VON KLUGE considered it urgent to replenish the weakened German lines.



ROMMEL, General EBER BACH and OB West VON KLUGE (from left). Both marshals

wanted the western front to be dissolved, but there were still differences of opinion.

When they first met, the new OB West ROMMEL had said: 'From now on you too must get used to carrying out orders like everyone else

ren. «

We know today that Field Marshal VON KLUGE had his own plans in the West, but did not know when Adolf HITLER was assassinated on July 20, 1944.

He therefore telephoned the OKW without consulting General SPEIDEL and demanded that General JODL transfer Count VON SCHWERIN 's hitherto inactive 116th Panzer Division to Caen.

He had no way of knowing that the conspirators in the West had saved them there for their putsch against HITLER and that the intact, powerful Panzer Division had been earmarked for the shielding of their headquarters in Paris. A few minutes later , without SPEI DEL being able to intervene, General JODL approved KLUGE's application, and the main power of the Paris conspirators rolled into Normandy, where the tough fighters later proved themselves to be outstanding.

The withdrawal of the 116th Panzer Division had the greatest consequences for the conspirators in Paris, because they no longer had any troops under their command when the assassination attempt

against HITLER failed on July 20, 1944 . Without 'own' troops, they could only hope to persuade Field Marshal VON KLUGE to join in after Field Marshal ROMMEL, who personally opposed an assassination attempt on HITLER , lay badly injured in the hospital.

### **The Impact of the July 20th Attack in the West**

Shortly before the July 20 attack, the members of the Western Army conspiracy were in a state of great excitement. Nowhere was the proportion of conspirators and resistance fighters in the highest positions as high as on the western front at the time of the Allied landings.

Even before the attack, the members of the conspiracy were instructed in sealed orders at the headquarters of Army Group B in La Roche-Guyon and at the headquarters of OB West in St. Germain

s for their behavior after the assassination was carried out and succeeded and after carrying out the keyword 'Valkyrie'. One of these sealed orders had also been handed over to Field Marshal VON KLUGE.<sup>1</sup> When Field Marshal VON KLUGE arrived at General SPEIDEL in La Roche-Guyon on the afternoon of July 20, he received two telephone calls in quick succession from Berlin that HITLER was dead and he had to make a quick decision.<sup>2, 3</sup> Shortly thereafter, VON KLUGE also heard

the appeal by Reich Minister of Propaganda GOEBBELS via Reichsfunk that HITLER was still alive. A telex also arrived from Field Marshal Wilhelm VON WITZLEBEN, who was to become the new Commander-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht after HITLER's death. Here too it was confirmed that HITLER was dead. After this telex, VON KLUGE said to his Chief of Staff, General BLUMENTRITT: 'You know, this is a historic moment. I would like to give the order to immediately stop the bombardment of England with the VI. If the Führer is dead, we should get in touch with the leadership on the other side straight away.' This was around 8:00 p.m. on July 20, 1944.

Only a later telephone call with Major General Helmuth STIEFF, another conspirator in the Army High Command in East Prussia, brought certainty that HITLER had survived the assassination attempt. Thereupon Field Marshal von Kluge decided not to join the conspiracy. Even before that he had felt that he was being set up by the other conspirators. And when a telephone conversation with Colonel Albrecht MERTZ VON QUIRNHEIM, another conspirator on Bendlerstrasse, was interrupted, KLUGE was careful not to have the connection restored.

In the meantime, General VON STÜLPNAGEL had already had alarm measures carried out in Paris in accordance with the "Valkyrie" order and had the heads of the SS and SD arrested by the 1st Security Regiment at the Paris city commander's office. Everything went smoothly because officers and troops believed the justification for this measure was that the Gestapo had attempted a putsch against HITLER. In the accommodation of the security regiment, the execution sites were already prepared with sandbags, where those sentenced to death among those arrested were later to be executed.

However, the arrest of the SS leaders was of no military significance, since some of the younger officers managed to escape. Notify you

<sup>1</sup> Hrowe H. SAUNDER, *The victory betrayed*, Druffel, Leoni 1984, pp. 273-276.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas VOGEL (ed.), *Rise of conscience. Military resistance against Hitler and the NS regime 1933-45*, Mittler, Hamburg 62001, pp. 323 and 584-595.

<sup>3</sup> David IRVING, *Battle of Europe*, DSZ, Munich 2004, p.184.



From above: Helmuth STIEFF and Albrecht MERTZ VON QUIRNHEIM

immediately contacted Oberfuhrer Kurt MEYER from the SS Hitler Youth Division, who was on duty at the front. As a result, telexes were sent to the SS divisions at the front, implying a detachment from the battle line. The spook in Paris would therefore have been short-lived.

In fact, however, the situation was not quite so clear, as there are indications that a number of high and highest commanders such as GUDERIAN and MODEL, but also the SS Generals DIETRICH and BITTRICH, after sounding out how they would position themselves in the event of a coup d'etat, had not made any reports to the top. They kept a low profile and waited to see who would win the power struggle.

After HITLER 's survival, Field Marshal VON KLUGE realized that his own existence was now at greatest risk. When the conspirator, General VON STÜLPNAGEL, arrived from Paris at around 8:15 p.m. and asked him to strike as promised, he was greeted with the words: "There's nothing more that can be done. The Fuhrer is alive!" At around 11:00 p.m., Field Marshal VON KLUGE finally decided to distance himself from the conspiracy and relieved General VON STÜLPNAGEL of his post, but gave him the opportunity to flee.

Shortly after midnight HITLER himself over the radio had spoken, von Kluge must have gotten scared because of his own involvement. His Chief of Staff TEMPELHOFF overheard VON KLUGE calling his son-in-law Dr. Udo ESCH, who worked as a military doctor in a Parisian hospital, called and asked him to deliver a certain matter immediately. These were seven ampoules of potassium cyanide, which ESCH had procured from a laboratory in Leipzig during his vacation, which should serve the main conspirators in the event of failure to bring the poison package to the field marshal.

Otto Ernst REMER,  
*Conspiracy and Treason  
about Hitler*, Remer Heipke,  
Bad Kissingen 1982, p. 96,  
112 and 145.

For the fighting troops, July 20, 1944 was without any meaning. When the news of the failure of the assassination attempt later reached the front, the reports met with complete incomprehension and disgust among the front-line troops.

## **Great disappointment on the Allied side**

On July 12 and 15, 1944, Allan DULLES informed President ROOSEVELT of the impending elimination of Adolf HITLER by the German opposition, and when the bomb was detonated on HITLER's headquarters ›Wolfsschanze‹ on July 20, 1944, not a single Allied plane was above the Reich territory. Was this not intended to impair the activities of the conspirators in any way and at the same time set signs of a possible agreement with a new German government?

It is hardly a coincidence that General EISENHOWER postponed the breakthrough battle originally scheduled for July 20, 1944 to July 25. Today, the unfavorable weather conditions are given as a reason, but there are probably more political motives behind it.

Allan DULLES was informed that the attack had taken place around 4:00 p.m. on July 20, but the Allies soon found out that the assassination attempt on the Führer had failed.

Wilhelm HOEGNER, a former member of the Reichstag for the SPD, had immigrated to Switzerland and established close ties with Allan DULLES there. Wilhelm HOEGNER wrote that he had never seen DULLES so depressed as after the news that the assassination attempt on HITLER had failed: "American politics had suffered a terrible defeat."

As a clear signal to the Allies after the failed assassination attempt, the

German high command in On the night of July 20th/21st the VI units were ordered to respond with "maximum retaliatory fire" on London. Now it was clear that the war would go on!

On July 22, 1944, the Commander-in-Chief, General EISENHOWER , called a meeting to discuss the current situation. According to eyewitness reports, the political situation played an important role in addition to the military situation.

But what happened on the part of London is still incomprehensible to this day.

## **London Treason**

After the failed assassination attempt and the attempted coup of July 20, 1944, one of the darkest and at the same time happened

most puzzling chapter in the relationship between the Western Allies and the German resistance.

Winston CHURCHILL declared in the House of Commons on August 2, 1944 that July 20 and the mass executions that followed were only in Britain's interest in seeing the rulers of the Third Reich choke one another's throats. And the *New York Times*, on August 9, 1944, likened the assassination attempt to bomb-kill the head of state and the commander-in-chief of his own army to a typical criminal method unworthy of the officer corps of a civilized state.<sup>1</sup> But it should much worse to come...

<sup>1</sup> Hans MEISER, *Betrayed Traitors*, Druffel, Stegen 2006, p. 159 f.

English propaganda stations for the German side, such as 'Soldatensender Calais' and 'Soldatensender I', directly and publicly named the conspirators involved in radio reports.

Of course, the head of the German Gestapo, General Heinrich MÜLLER, initially thought this was just a propaganda ploy, but a more detailed routine check showed the truthfulness of the involvement of all the names mentioned.

General MÜLLER described to his American interviewees in 1948 that "only God knows how many people he was able to arrest based on information from this source."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Gregory DOUGLAS, *Gestapo Chief. The Interrogation of Heinrich Müller*, Vol. 1, James Bender 1995, p. 179 f.

In addition, a well-known English intelligence officer gave German agents in Berne lists of the names, official positions, and addresses of the conspirators with whom the Allied governments had been in contact before the war. Among them was the foreign politician of the German resistance, TROTT ZU SOLZ. It was completely unclear to General MÜLLER why the British had played into HITLER's hands and delivered the opposition on the platter to the knife. According to his statements, however, it was not a random action, but the order came directly from CHURCHILL.

It is of fundamental importance that those among General EISENHOWER's German accomplices who belonged to the immediate vicinity of the 20th

July 1944, after the failure of the assassination attempt for the Allies were no longer negotiating partners. They had not been able to keep their promise to bring about an overthrow in Germany and then open the fronts to the Western Allies. In addition, the people around Colonel VON STAUFFENBERG were suspected of actually having sympathies for the Soviets and striving for a "workers' and peasants' regime."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Christof MAUCH, *Shadow war against Hitler. The Third Reich in the sights of the American secret services 1941-45*, DVA, Stuttgart 1999, p. 170.



It looks like the Allies want to move after July 20th  
get rid of the group of 'ideologues' of the German resistance.

However, this did not apply to the "practitioners", whose good offices were gladly called upon until the end of the war. The "Werther" espionage network in the OKW also survived the purges after July 20, 1944 completely unscathed.

## **The Allied July Crisis – the Germans are again unresponsive**

Around July 20, 1944, the Allied offensive in Normandy was in deep crisis.<sup>1,2</sup>

On July 18, 1944, the British had succeeded in taking Caen, but where Field Marshal MONTGOMERY wanted to be on June 7, 1944, he had for the 12 kilometers that, according to the Allied operational plan, he had on the first day of the landing should put back, needed more than a month. The British casualties were greater than the Imperial General Staff had estimated for the entire campaign up to Berlin.

It is true that Caen had now fallen, but the breakthrough and the push across the Orne had again not succeeded, the open ground for one

1 Hrowe H. SAUNDERS,  
*The Victory Betrayed*, Druffel,  
Leoni 1984, p. 262.

2 Michael REYNOLDS, *An  
Opponent Like Steel. The I.  
SS Panzer Corps in Norman  
die 1944*, Pour le Mérite,  
Selent 1997, p. 165.



Downed Panzer VI  
"Tiger" after the Battle  
of Caen On July 20, the  
Reuter agency reported:  
"The offensive near Caen

has developed into the  
largest tank battle of this  
war in the west.

ROMMEL threw his  
own Panzer and anti-  
tank detachments at  
MONTGOMERY's  
armored formations south  
of Caen, and the two  
army heads have been  
fighting each other for 24  
hours now."

July 20, 1944,  
Americans make their  
way through the  
ruined city of Saint-  
Lô. (From: Janusz  
PIKALKIEWICZ,  
*Invasion France 1944*,  
Southwest, Munich 1979)



Tank battle and to operate on Paris not won. On the contrary, the English attack stopped about eight kilometers south of the execution position in front of the last German line of defence, and the Germans even launched a tank counterattack, which was stopped with difficulty. 253 British tanks had been lost in the failed Goodwood offensive, and pessimists began to speak of a Kursk in the West.

The last German attempt to regain the initiative on the Eastern Front failed in Kursk in the summer of 1943.

Like the English at Caen on the west wing, the Americans tried to break through the German Normandy front at St. Lô on the right wing. Eight divisions started the breakthrough offensive here. Although there were frontal burglaries, but here too none decisive the breakthrough. A German counter-offensive even threatened to cut off the advanced US forces between Vire and St. Lô.

While the German high command was dealing with the consequences of the 20th July occupied, the Allied High Command, unnoticed by the Germans, spoke of a crisis. The Allied divisions were pinned down despite the help of General EISENHOWER's German helpers. No other reserves were available to reinforce, and EISENHOWER made his famous remark that the Allies could hardly wait, at the cost of a thousand tons of bombs apiece

mile to march across France. The relief of Field Marshal MONTGOMERY was seriously considered. The official American and English situation reports, as well as press reports (eg Agency Reuter and United Press of July 24, 1944) are full of doubts and concerns. It was about the "collapse of the Allied breakthrough."

Even General EISENHOWER was plagued by the nightmare that the Germans would bring their infantry from southern France to reinforce them. They had the time now! For him there was no telling what would happen next. The Allied High Command reckoned that in this case their own troops would still be pinned down in their beachheads by the onset of winter, with no possibility of large-scale operational movements.

"The freezing of the front" went through the air like a specter allied staffs. A material war like that of 1918 was feared.

One sign of how serious the situation was was that US soldiers deployed in France were not given any leave at all in the summer and fall of 1944. This only changed when the German Reich border was reached.<sup>1</sup>

The reinforcements from German troops, who were already stationed in the west, more precisely in France, would pin down the Allied troops in their still small bridgehead. If autumn then came with storms and rainy weather and the notorious Normandy winter with the impossibility of large-scale landing operations in connection with rough seas, which paralyzed all supplies for weeks, then it would be the turn of the German Wehrmacht and could destroy the bridgehead with their retaliatory weapons. The Allied supreme commanders knew that they could then no longer be dealing only with V1 and V-2. The specter of German atomic bomb use loomed large.

The German high command in the west would now have had a great opportunity to ruin the Allied general staff plan by shifting the existing reserve infantry and armored divisions to the right wing. HITLER and the German High Command took no notice of the Allied crisis and the opportunities presented to them. Until it was too late, Germany kept numerous powerful divisions standing to defend against feared invasions at the Pas-de-Calais and in southern France.

In June 1944 the armored reconnaissance vehicle ›Puma‹ (Sd.Kfz.234/2) came to the western front for the first time. The pioneering vehicle with a top speed of 90 km/h and a range of 1000 km was built after 1945

<sup>1</sup> Martin VAN CREFELD,  
*Kampfkraft*, Ares, Graz,  
2005, p. 129.

Scout tank  
'Puma' (Sd.Kfz.234/2)



Prototype for many wheeled tanks around the world. For the 'movement phase' of the Battle of Normandy, the 'Puma', which had no equal opponent on the Allied side, could have been of great use to the Germans. But what use are all the reconnaissance results if your own high command does not react to them?

### **Without reinforcements: the American breakthrough**

After the failure of July 20 without any hope of political change in the German Reich, General EISENHOWER demanded on July 22. July an advance with all forces.

On Tuesday, July 25, 1944, the great Allied breakthrough battle began, which slowly led to the crumbling of the German front lines with heavy casualties for both sides. The British arm of the attack was soon brought to a standstill by the SS near Falaise, but this was no longer possible with the larger offensive of the 1st US Army (code name "Cobra"), despite bitter resistance. This is exactly what ROMMEL and VON RUNDSTEDT had predicted if there were no reinforcements. Even the time frame matched their calculations!

It was only when two US armored divisions forced the torn units of the 7th Army to retreat and laid the groundwork for a wide-ranging war of movement that the first division of the 15th Army, which was constantly "rifle at foot" in the Pas-de-Calais, became active. had been transferred to Normandy to reinforce the collapsing front. Now the divisions from the Pas-de-Calais were just in time to be dragged down one by one and beaten one by one. The same thing happened to the tanks finally withdrawn from southern France.

Another trick used repeatedly and successfully by the conspirators up to the German collapse in 1945, to present HITLER and the High Command with incorrect (excessive) reports of the strength of their own troops, also contributed to the Allied breakthrough. This explains why HITLER and JODL worked with divisions that actually had only a fraction of the reported strength and counted on replacements that did not exist. If the ordered operation then failed, HITLER could not explain the causes, and serious allegations followed against the local commanders.<sup>1</sup> To this day, those responsible for the systematic false reports remain a mystery.

The Americans now swarmed out like a fan into free French space. Protected by absolute Allied air superiority, they didn't have to worry about their flanks.

As US columns along the roads between Coutances and Vire

1 Heinz MACENHEIMER, »Fateful decisions«

Adolf Hitler as commander and strategist«, in: *German military journal*, special edition, 2006, p. 142.

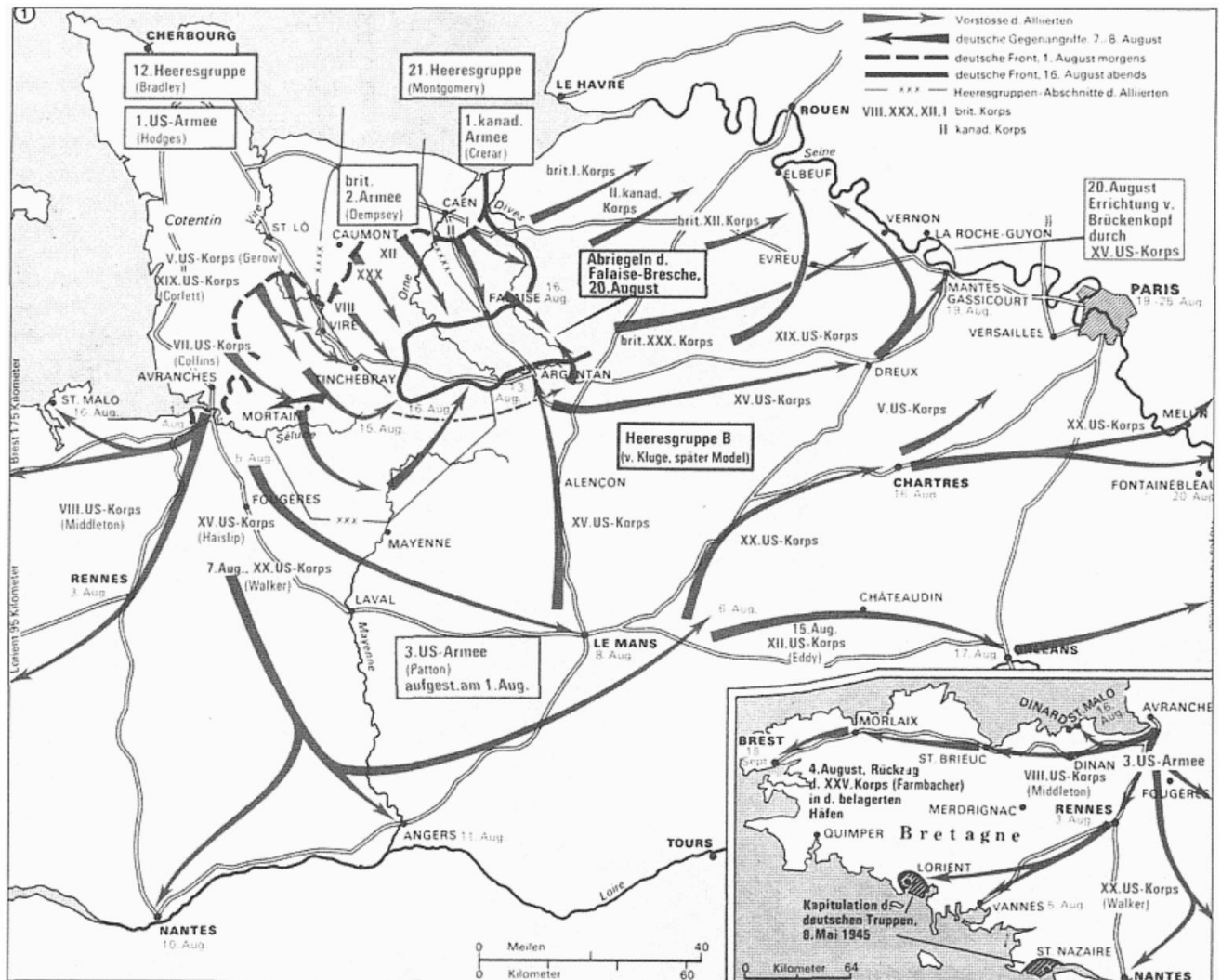
2 Michael REYNOLDS, *An Opponent Like Steel. The I. SS Panzer Corps in Normandy, 1944*, Pour le Mérite, Selent 1997, p. 182.



roared, the Americans could hardly believe their success. General Patton's 4th Armored Division reached Avranches in 36 hours after a 40 kilometer advance.

A counterattack by Colonel BACHERER with the 77. Infanteriedivision nothing more. After recapturing Avranches, Allied jabos smashed its 14 self-propelled guns and thwarted its attack. The German OKW saw the imminent danger and wanted to close the American breakout site with a bold undertaking. The gate was now open for the last great drama of the Battle of Normandy.<sup>2</sup>

With Operation "Cobra" the Americans succeeded from July breakthrough at Avranches. The subsequent war of movement forced large parts of the 7th Army already on 27/28. July to the task.



## The Death of an Army: Field Marshal von Kluge and the Falaise Pocket

The situation on 16. August 1944. Map from: *The Second World War*, Vol. 4, *Total War*, Hamburg 1989.

In 1944 Field Marshal Günther VON KLUGE took over as the new OB West, succeeding Field Marshal Gerd VON RUNDSTEDT. Because of his successes in the First Battle of France (1940) and in Russia, he was highly valued by HITLER .

For General EISENHOWER's German helpers was the field marshal of great interest.

KLUGE's role in the resistance against HITLER remains a mystery to this day. It seems certain that he was aware of the assassination plans and benevolently tolerated members of the conspiracy around him.

He was not directly involved in the July 20 assassination, but appears to have had his own plans to end the war in the West.

In anticipation, the circle around KLUGE tried to persuade allies at home to give up the western front or at least to stand still in the event of unilateral action by the conspirators in Paris and Berlin.

Around July 17, 1944, General Heinz GUDERIAN, then commander of the Panzerwaffe training troops, had ordered his combat-capable formations to be transferred from Berlin to East Prussia when representatives of the conspirators contacted him. At the same time, this event proves once again that high-ranking representatives of the Luftwaffe were actively involved in the attempt to abandon the western front:<sup>1</sup>

“On the afternoon of July 18, a Luftwaffe general I knew from before called in and asked for an interview. He informed me that the new commander in the West, Field Marshal von KLUGE, intended to conclude an armistice with the Western powers without HITLER's knowledge and to enter into negotiations with the enemy to this end. This news hit me like a bludgeon. The consequences of this step by KLUGE and its effects on the shaky eastern front and on the fate of Germany as a whole were immediately apparent in my mind's eye. It would have resulted in the immediate collapse of our defenses in the East and West and would have led to an unstoppable Russian advance. Up to that moment I had not imagined that a German general opposed to the head of the Reich would come to such a decision on the enemy. Since I could not believe the information I received, I asked the person I was talking to about his source. He refused to specify them. Nor did he tell me why he was making this devastating announcement to me and what he hoped to gain from it. When I asked whether the planned step would take place in the near future, he answered no. « This makes it clear that KLUGE's plans had nothing to do with the assassination attempt on HITLER.

1 Heinz GUDERIAN,  
*Memories of a Soldier*,  
Motorbuch, Stuttgart  
1998, p. 306-309.

It is striking that GUDERIAN did not name the Luftwaffe General who informed him. This can only mean that the activities of this man during the war could not be uncovered by the German counterintelligence. Today we know that this was General BARSEWISCH, the chief of German air reconnaissance.

GUDERIAN also mentioned that after the assassination of July 20th, the positions of the General Staff of the

OKH (High Command of the Army) had to take place because the previous holders of the position had either been injured in the assassination or were suspected of having been an accomplice.

On July 20, VON KLUGE was apparently surprised by the attempted assassination of HITLER and only received information from General SPEIDEL about the situation in Berlin at 6:00 p.m. In view of the unclear situation, Field Marshal SPERRLE and the French military commander, General VON STÜLPNAGEL, were ordered to La Roche Guyon. Contributing to the uncertainty and to von Kluge's doubts was that the conspirators, through the senior communications officer in France, General Eugen Oberhauser, had almost all radio and telephone traffic between France and Germany blocked, with the exception of the Berlin line (where the conspirators' headquarters were). This was done in the middle of the war, regardless of the military disadvantages that might result.

But when a telephone call brought KLUGE the certainty that HITLER was alive, he decided, as I said, not to join the conspiracy. He repeatedly stressed to General STÜLPNAGEL that he would have been willing to take part "if HITLER had been dead." This was the premise of his earlier promise. 2 "Since the pig is alive, my hands have been tied. 1, tied." 3 GUDERIAN's own role in the assassination was dubious: although "persuaded" to take part in the assassination, he was not to take part in the "Valkyrie" exercise planned for July 20 (the planned coup d'etat was to take place under this guise) in Berlin for 2 to 3 days.

1 Thomas VOGEL (ed.), *Rise of conscience. Military resistance against Hitler and the Nazi regime 1933-45*, p. 459, Mittler, Hamburg 2001, p. 459.

2 Hans SPEIDEL, *Invasion 1944. A contribution to the fate of Rommel and the Reich*, Wunderlich, Tübingen 1949, p. 145 f.

3 Hans MEISER, *Betrayed Traitors*, Druffel, Stegen 2006, p. 239.

Otherwise the attempted coup would not have happened for lack of mass! Appointed by HITLER as Chief of Staff on July 20, 1944 (while the Secret Field Police searched GUDERIAN's apartment and vehicle without any result), he tried to have VON KLUGE replaced as part of a new regulation in order to protect the western front from a planned dissolution by the field marshal: » After the discussion with the OKW officers, I went to report to HITLER around noon. The conversation then turned to personal details. My wishes for the position in the OKH were approved. The staffing of the most important front-line commands was touched upon. At this point I remarked that the new Commander-in-Chief West does not have a lucky hand in the command of large armored formations and that I must therefore propose



to use it elsewhere. HITLER chimed in: 'And by the way, he is an accomplice in the assassination!' KEITEL, JODL and BURGDORF all three remarked that Field Marshal von KLUGE was 'the best horse in the stable' and that, despite his complicity, he was not to be dispensed with could. My attempt to inconspicuously remove Mr. VON KLUGE from the western front failed. However, since HITLER was evidently far better informed than I was about the attitude of Field Marshal VON KLUGE, I refrained from taking any further steps."

In fact, Colonel i. G. VON GERSDORFF again persuaded his former boss VON KLUGE ZU on July 28, 1944 to start negotiations with the Western Allies immediately and to take power in Germany with "reliable combat units". The majority of the former western troops were to be transferred to the German eastern border with the aim of achieving a ceasefire there as well.

This big solution was obviously too risky for KLUGE, while abandoning the western front alone seemed more promising.

In the meantime, serious doubts arose in HITLER's environment that VON KLUGE had anything to do with the attack of April 20. July might have had to do. Therefore, the reliability of OB 1 West, Field Marshal VON KLUGE, was skeptically checked. HITLER uttered the words: "I cannot leave the campaign in the West to KLUGE." In his next radio message, picked up by Ultra-Radio Intelligence, Hitler ordered the

Todt Organization to build launch pads for the V1 and V-2 in the Pas-de-Calais to stop and instead to create defensive positions in the hinterland. A sign that the loss of the Battle of Normandy was now seriously expected.

However, the American breakthrough had sensitive flanks what HITLER did not miss.

On August 2nd he ordered Field Marshal VON KLUGE to withdraw four armored divisions and a sufficient number of infantry divisions from the front and recapture Avranches in a determined counterattack. In this way he wanted to split the American forces at the base of the Cotentin Peninsula.

The Germans were then to throw the Americans back north and onto the coast. Within a very short time, the German troops on the defensive, mainly at night, had succeeded in relocating and regrouping for the attack, an amazing achievement given the total air superiority of the Alli



From above: Hans-Günther  
VON KLUGE and Heinz  
GUDERIAN.

ated. General EISENHOWER commented: "For the first time, two months after the start of the invasion, the Germans succeeded in assembling their armored forces in the manner they were used to." Now the 1st and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions as well as the 2nd and 116th Panzer divisions (›SPEIDELs putsch reserve ›) under the designation ›Panzergruppe Eberbach‹ with 400 tanks achieved what they were not allowed to carry out at the beginning of June.

The whole thing looked like a new edition of the successful HIT strategy LERs during the French campaign in 1940.

But here, too, the 'Normandy Effect' caused a terrible fate.

VON KLUGE warned HITLER against such an offensive action. A quarrel then arose between the Reich Chancellor and the Field Marshal, which the Allies intercepted with an Ultra.

Meanwhile, in the area east of Avranches, the German assault forces were twiddling their thumbs grimly, awaiting the order to engage.

It was not until the morning of August 7, 1944 that Marshal VON KLUGE carried out his Führer's orders. The tenacity with which he had argued with HITLER about the planned attack gave the Allies, who were simultaneously informed of all the details via Ultra, a vital period of four days in which to prepare. The bold attack would probably have succeeded if the Allied defense positions had been prepared near Avranches.<sup>1</sup> The 1st General Staff officer of the 116th Panzer Division, which was affected time and again by the "Normandy Effect" until the final dismissal of its commander, Count VON SCHWERIN, then wrote meaningfully in the post-war period:<sup>2</sup> »The preparation and execution of this attack do not represent a glorious page in the annals of German military history.«

The responsible General VON FUNCK had to allow for a delay of several hours, since the 116th Panzer Division had not responded in time when attacking.<sup>3</sup> A fatal omission, as it later turned out.

Witnesses of the 7th SS Panzer Company also reported that numerous German Panzer IVs of the 2nd Panzer Division lay dormant in the woods throughout the attack and were not used. Did they have no orders, or did they stay behind on purpose?<sup>4</sup>

When the German full-scale attack finally began, its momentum carried the German units 12 kilometers over the town of Mortain

1 Frederich WINTERBOTHAM, *Action Ultra. Germany's code machine helped the Allies win*, Moewig, Rastatt 1976, pp. 154-166.

2 Heinz Günther GUDERIAN, *From Normandy to the Ruhr with the 116th Panzer Division in World War II*, AUSA 2001, p. 72.

3 H. H. SAUNDERS, *The Victory Betrayed. the allies Invasion in Normandy 1944 and its background*, Druffel, Leoni 1984, p. 294 f.

4 Michael REYNOLDS, *An opponent like steel*, Pour le Mérite, Selent 2004, p. 185.



As part of Operation Liège, the German 5th Panzer Army under EBERBACH is to advance from Mortain to Avranches in order to cut off and encircle the Americans under PATTON . In the absence of air support, it was not PATTON'S tanks that got into the pocket, but 15 German divisions. In addition, on August 16, 1944, the Canadians under General MONT COMERY managed to break through from Caen.

out. Half of the attack distance was already covered. Then, however, the Allied fighter-bomber attack began, and shortly thereafter the Germans ran into General BRADLEY's concentrated artillery fire

in. Although there was no mention of this in the German radio messages read by the Allies, the terrible American artillery fire must have aroused the suspicion that the German attack was expected by the Allies. The 'Operation Liège', the only major German attack during the entire Battle of Normandy, ended in a fiasco.

It was the second time, after the Panzer battles of Kursk and Orel in 1943, that a major tank attack had been halted primarily by aerial action, for the American ground forces admitted that they would not have been able to concede the German attack stop if it hadn't been weakened by the Allied missile fighter bombers. 90 German tanks and 200 vehicles were destroyed from the air in a few minutes.

Nevertheless, the counterattack was different from what is presented today, a successful action by a hair's breadth, because General Omar BRADLEY be

confirmed some time later: 'Our defenses were much thinner south of Mortain. If the enemy had moved their tanks a few thousand yards to the side, they would have broken through to Avranches on the first day.'<sup>1</sup> But the Allies had Ultra, the Germans didn't!

<sup>1</sup> Otto Ernst REMER, *Conspiracy and Treason about Hitler*, Remer-Heipke, Bad Kissingen 51993, p. 140-145.

On August 8, VON KLUGE ordered the retreat to the starting positions without HITLER's permission .

HITLER now demanded renewed preparations for a second counterattack in the direction of Avranches and the sea, hoping to cut off the American supply lines after all.

Commander-in-Chief VON KLUGE now appeared to have decided to capitulate to the Western Allies. On August 12, 1944, he made a front visit to the Falaise pocket to confer with his commanders. During this visit to the front he was considered missing for 24 hours. Based on a report from Field Marshal KEITEL , HITLER concluded that KLUGE was in contact with the enemy, since a radio message from KLUGE to this effect had been picked up by a German Wehrmacht listening company.<sup>2</sup> General GUDERIAN confirmed that »HITLER was in despair when KLUGE was almost was thought to have disappeared for a day«.

<sup>2</sup> Alex VANACES-BACINSKIS, *Agressors*, Vol. 1: *Tank Buster Versus Combat Vehicle*, Airlife 1990, pp. 62-66.

Field Marshal MONTGOMERY and General EISENHOWER announced in the post-war period that there had been no connection to KLUGE . On June 25, 1945, however, an article appeared in the American magazine *Time* , which was probably written at the behest of the American General PATTON . It stated that VON KLUGE had waited in vain for hours on the Avranches road to meet officers of the American Third Army, with whom he had an appointment. The reason given for the failure of this meeting was the desolate condition of the road, which was said to have been completely destroyed by Allied bombing raids. Fatefully, VON KLUGE had already disappeared when the American negotiators arrived.

<sup>3</sup> Erich KEMPKA, *The Last Days with Adolf Hitler*, DVC, Preußisch Oldendorf 52004, p. 1 86 f.

<sup>4</sup> Gregory DOUGLAS, *Gestapo Chief. The 1948 Interrogation of Heinrich Müller*, Vol.1, James Bender 1997, p. 178.

VON KLUGE had stayed behind halfway and had sent his General Staff officer, Major BEHR , alone to the rendezvous with General EBERBACH and the other generals in the pocket. A random Allied fighter-bomber had played fate and destroyed VON KLUGE's only radio car, which he had taken into the pocket. He couldn't keep in touch with the Americans like that. VON KLUGE feared betrayal and returned to his headquarters without his radio station.<sup>3, 4</sup>

Allen DULLES also later confirmed that VON KLUGE had "made a vain attempt to capitulate somewhere in the Falaise pocket to General PATTON 's army."

In the meantime, it has also become clearer who VON KLUGE wanted to meet: in the US Army's war history files there is a report on the statement by Lieutenant Colonel George R. PFANN, Secretary to General PATTON's 3rd Army Joint Chiefs of Staff, in 1945. PFANN stated that PATTON had disappeared from Army Headquarters for an entire day in mid-August 1944. When he returned, he said he had gone to try and contact a German emissary, who failed to show up at the appointed place.

HITLER then informed those around him that only an "unbelievable coincidence« prevented VON KLUGE from attempting to make contact.

He further accused VON KLUGE of having failed in Avranches' counterattack because the Field Marshal wanted it to fail.

In fact, historians like David IRVING confirm that VON KLUGE abetted American operations to encircle the 'Panzergruppe Eberbach'. Despite HITLER 's clear orders

KLUGE General EBERBACH's Panzer Group far too far north, almost supporting US General PATTON's encirclement operation. The General Inspector of the Panzer Troops, GUDERIAN, also accused VON KLUGE of apparently deliberately leading the Panzer units into the developing Falaise pocket.

Massive accusations from a professional!

Before the Allies could close the Falaise Pocket, the Forêt du Gouffern had enormous reserves of fuel and ammunition. But no one in the entire Normandy Army found out about it. Instead, the supply columns had to go as far as the Paris area. In view of the Allied superiority in the air, this could only lead to great delays and terrible losses. The mammoth camp in the Forêt du Gouffern was later handed over to the Allies.<sup>1</sup> An indication of the fateful success with which supplies for Army Group B continued to be sabotage even after WAGNER and FINCKH had been eliminated.

Soviet post-war evaluations confirm that KLUGE's temporary disappearance completely upset the formations of Army Group B.<sup>2</sup> In the confusion, some of them withdrew to completely new starting positions, which, together with the two-day loss of time, would have led to the planned second counterattack



General Heinrich  
EBERBACH (1895-1992).

<sup>1</sup> Lothar GREIL, *Gloria Mundi*,  
Iptinger Buchverlag,  
Iptingen 1984, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> Heinrich EBERLE and Matthi  
as UHL (ed.), *Das Buch Hitler*,  
Lübbe, Bergisch Gladbach  
2005, p. 298.

nullified. KLUGE disappeared in an unknown direction just before it was supposed to begin. Without orders or missions, the units of Army Group B had to defend themselves against the Allies, who were able to expand their breakthrough so quickly.

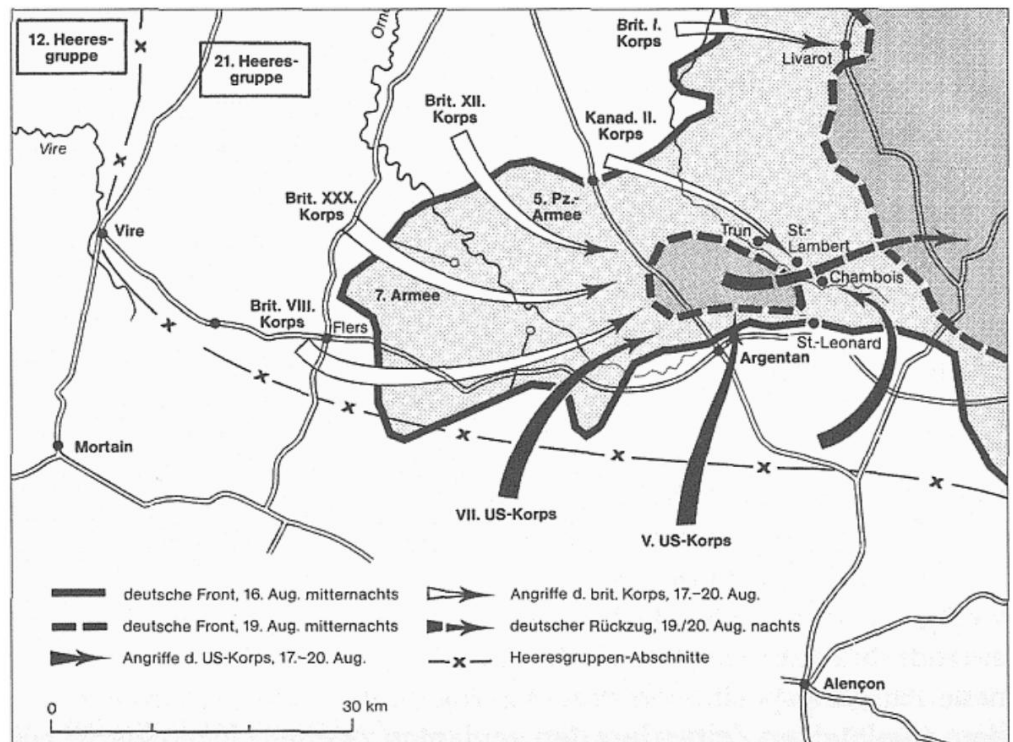
After returning from the pocket to his headquarters in La Roche-Guyon, VON KLUGE received a letter from the Führer's headquarters on August 17, according to which he had been replaced as Commander-in-Chief by Field Marshal MODEL and transferred to the 'Fuehrer Reserve'.

See the full text in the appendix.

Ordered back to Germany, he took cyanide during a rest stop on his journey near Verdun.

Before that, he had handed his escort officer, Lieutenant TANGERMANN, a letter to HITLER with the instruction to have it forwarded to the Fuhrer via Obergruppenfuhrer Sepp DIETRICH for safety reasons. This is how Field Marshal VON KLUGE died in despair. His escort officer, Lieutenant TANGERMANN, also denied the attempted contact with the Allies. However, on October 23, 1945, VON KLUGE's son-in-law, Udo ESCH, as a military doctor in a Paris hospital, made a completely opposite statement. He considered his father-in-law to be an opponent of National Socialism. He also knew of a meeting in Berlin in 1943 with GOERDELER and VON TRESCKOW and of the maturing of the Ver

Smashing of the German divisions encircled in the Falaise pocket. From: Janusz PIEKALKIEWICZ, *Invasion. France 1944*, Southwest, Munich 1979



oath on the western front.

Above all, ESCH stated that after the failure of July 20, his father-in-law had considered surrendering to the Western Allies at his own risk. ESCH: "He went to the front, but could not establish contact with the Allied commander."

Gestapo chief General MÜLLER also confirmed VON KLUGE's attempts to make contact in the post-war period. Also the one about the mili

General Heinrich VON EBERBACH, who was becoming ever more desperate in view of the political situation, was now being worked on by the conspirators because of a partial capitulation of his Panzer Group with the aim of »opening up the front«. However, VON EBERBACH did not want to act without or against his boss, SS General HAUSER

The failed capitulation of the German western army in August 1944 meant that the Falaise pocket developed into a terrible field of destruction for the German NormandyVer army holding out there. There were western



Above: The Inferno of Falaise, painting by Frank WOOTON »Typhoon Rocket Bomber at Falaise«. Below: French women greet 'liberators' after the Battle of Falaise.

Standards almost incredible scenes of destruction of war material and merciless slaughter of people and panicked horses - mostly from the air.

Nonetheless, in the battle to break out of the Falaise pocket, the British and Americans made some significant mistakes, which are still bitterly disputed among the former allies to this day. These mistakes meant that a significant part of the combat-ready cadres of the German armored troops was able to break out of the pocket, leaving their vehicles behind.

The German troops thus escaping at Falaise later formed the backbone of the defense during the airborne landing of Arnhem and of the German shock troops in the Ardennes offensive.

Even if the Allied victory at Falaise was incomplete, it nevertheless marked the end of the Battle of Normandy. The German troops that escaped from the pocket were mostly only able to save their bare lives. The proud Normandy army no longer existed.

For the first time General EISENHOWER could look forward to the further course of the war in Western Europe with confidence, as the French scientist Albert DUCROCQ wrote in 1947.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Albert Ducrocq, "Les Armes Secretes Allemandes", sv, Berger Levraut, Paris 1947.

The role of the Allied ultra-radio reconnaissance in the German disaster at Falaise is undisputed, the part played by Günther VON KLUGE's actions will probably always remain hidden in the twilight of history.

## **Still failed: the end of the uprising in the West**

By July 20, 1944 at the latest, HITLER had realized that chaos and rebelliousness, to the point of open rebellion, had taken hold of the generals in the western army. This applied not only to the army but also to the divisional commanders of the SS, who were sent into combat every day against the material superiority of the Western Allies and felt betrayed by the distant German high command. Most of the front generals did not know that they were right in the truest sense of the word.

To the increasingly faster and seemingly unstoppable

To halt the decline of the western army, HITLER transferred some commanders who had proved they could fight from the eastern front to the west. The first of these was Field Marshal Walter

MODEL, whom Minister of Propaganda GOEBBELS called the "saviour of the Eastern Front." MODEL liked to refer to himself as the "fireman



of the leader". As a master of improvisation and defense strategy, he had succeeded three times in preventing the total defeat of the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front. And if anyone could stabilize the crumbling western front, HITLER was sure it could only be MODEL .

Although MODEL owed his meteoric rise to HITLER , he was also one of the few who contradicted him. His method of leadership was to act first and ask for approval afterwards, and because he got results, he got away with it every time.

Like many high generals and commanders, Field Marshal MODEL was informed about the military resistance against HITLER , and like almost everyone else he tolerated the activities of the "conspirators" in his ranks without taking part in them himself.

One of the few commanders who was not taken into his confidence was Field Marshal Albert KESSELRING, the supreme commander of the German troops in Italy. KESSELRING's troops had successfully resisted the Allied troops in Italy when the balance of power was far less well distributed, and it remains to be clarified why, in the run-up to the invasion of France, not a single one of Field Marshal KESSELRING 's staff officers, who had been successful in countering the invasion, was assigned to France.<sup>1</sup> We should too believe in coincidence here?

Apparently it could be quite dangerous if an officer who had been informed in advance of the planned uprising spoke out clearly against this suggestion. On June 23, 1944, the Junkers Ju 52 of Generaloberst Eduard DIETL, the supreme commander of the Lapland Army, crashed after a visit to HITLER's headquarters on the return flight to his troops.

A few weeks before his sudden death, he had indignantly declined to join the resistance but promised not to say anything about it.

According to modern research it should be clear that the crash of DIETL's Ju 52 was caused intentionally by an explosive device on board. In fact, the general who wanted to win over DIETL to the resistance actually took part in Colonel -General DIETL 's later funeral with a small group in Munich . When condoling, the 'friend' of one of the DIETL daughters explained that her father could still be alive if he hadn't behaved so negatively on his part. Targeted misinformation also with the help of the ›Military History



'Fireman' Field Marshal  
Walter MODEL

(1891-1945). He replaced Günther VON KLUGE and distinguished himself particularly in the Battle of the

<sup>1</sup> Albert KESSELRING,  
*Thoughts on the Second  
World War*, Bublies,

Schnellbach 2

1 Research by Colonel ad Konrad KNABE, in: Franz KUROWSKI, *Colonel General Dietl. German Army Commander at the Arctic Circle*, Bublies, Schnellbach 2001, pp. 293-299.



Hans Valentin HUBE  
(1890-1944)

2 Of the remnants of those 15 divisions that were stuck in the pocket with more than 100,000 men, 50,000 were taken prisoner and 10,000 dead remained in the pocket.

chen Forschungsamt der Bundeswehr<sup>1</sup> are still trying to spread the 'accident hypothesis'.<sup>1</sup> A short time earlier, on April 21, 1944, Panzer General HUBE had also died in a conspicuous 'crash accident' when he returned from a visit to HITLER with a machine of the OKH courier squadron to Berlin. Generaloberst HUBE was one of HITLER's favorite generals, and during his visit shortly before the crash he had presented him with the diamonds on the oak leaves of the Knight's Cross on the Obersalzberg. HITLER was thinking about appointing HUBE Commander-in-Chief of the Army, but postponed the date of the appointment. This was prevented with the sudden fall of Generaloberst HUBE. HUBE's death is also one of the 'unsolved cases'.

Against this background and wedged between a desperate war situation, fanatical slogans to hold out, opportunistic and rebellious officers, Field Marshal MODEL had to set about saving the hopeless situation in the West.

As soon as MODEL took command of the German western front, he ordered a general retreat without consulting HITLER first. But it was almost too late, since the German troops had been trapped in the Falaise Pocket for far too long and were now being destroyed bit by bit by the Allies. MODEL ordered the breakout from the pocket, allowing thousands of German soldiers to escape.

Among them were almost all senior officers.<sup>2</sup>

Three weeks later, Field Marshal Walter MODEL had achieved the seemingly impossible: the Wehrmacht and SS in the west were reformed and order restored. There could no longer be any talk of capitulation in the West.

## Field Marshal Model and "General Eisenhower's Aide"

Of course, after Field Marshal VON KLUGE's death, people like General SPEIDEL and other senior officers also tried his

to influence the successor Field Marshal MODEL in their favor. He was to be persuaded to make an "independent operational decision in the West," in other words, to surrender unconditionally to EISENHOWER. Indeed, in his book on the invasion, General SPEIDEL confirms that during the short period of cooperation between Field Marshal MODEL

and gave him several opportunities to discuss the general situation and the "necessary political and military conclusions."

According to SPEIDEL , MODEL saw the hopelessness of the situation, but wanted nothing to do with the demanded arbitrary acts of capitulation in the West. He even refused to go to HITLER , "that's not his desk."

MODEL knew how unpopular his predecessors VON RUNDSTEDT and ROMMEL had made themselves with HITLER without achieving anything. He also referred to the show trials after July 20th. There could no longer be any talk of capitulation in the West!

SPEIDEL now resigned. Significantly , he writes in his book: " Neither political nor military decisions of a fundamental nature were to be expected from his (MODEL's - GEORG's note ) leadership."1 General SPEIDEL's possibilities of influencing the events of the Second World

War were now quickly coming to an end.

On September 5, 1944, he was recalled as Chief of Staff of Army Group B east of Liège without further explanation and replaced by General of the Infantry KREBS . On September 7, 1944, he was arrested on HIMMLER's orders and taken to the basement of the Reich Security

Main Office on Prinz Albertstrasse in Berlin.  
He was released and arrested several times.

Protected by prominent advocates, he saw the end of the war in prison.

### **Was the partial capitulation in the West a promising option?**

Fate ensured in the summer of 1944 that there was no partial surrender of German units to the Allies in the West. Field Marshal Albert KESSELRING was the last German supreme commander in the west until the end of the war. In the post-war period he also commented on the question of partial capitulations in his memoirs *soldat to the last day* . He wrote: 2 »On the other hand, it was understandable that after five years of war other thoughts would take root in the heads of the leaders, that the political situation, the military possibilities and the economic conditions (! – comment GEORG) were discussed. But all this should not dominate the purely factual, tactical task ... It was idle, about that

1 Hans SPEIDEL, *Invasion 1944*, Wunderlich, Tübingen gen 51949, p. 170.

2 Albert KESSELRING, *Soldier until the last day*, Bublies, Schnellbach 2000, p. 380, 409,411 fu424.

to think about whether the die was cast against us after the successful invasion of Normandy. The collapse on the German western front (March/April 1945 – GEORG's note) was much more worrying than the avoidable Allied invasion success to this extent, which subsequently led to despair even of a draw.«

This was the reason why from the fall of 1944 KESSELRING supported SS Obergruppenfuhrer WOLFF 's plan to establish contact with the Americans in Switzerland. As a soldier he had come to believe that at this point in the war there had to be a debate at the political level. The purpose of the negotiations was to make it possible.

KESSELRING continued: "If the German leadership had been forced to capitulate at the wrong time through the independent action of a single general, namely at a moment when there was still the slightest possibility of an improvement in the political situation, or when there were decisive disadvantages for one part of the people could still be avoided, one would rightly have called this general a traitor to the German cause and not only condemned it before history. The example of PETAIN-WEYGAND speaks for itself (capitulation of France in 1940 – note GEORG).

To justify oneself in the event of such a capitulation by saying that the conditions for the German people and for the individual had been made easier was unreal even then. In view of the Yalta and Potsdam decisions and later reality, this assumption can no longer be upheld by anyone. I only need to point out the voluntary capitulation of individual unions, which brought no benefit either to the community or to the individual. Perhaps a personal advantage would have accrued to the commander who had made such a decision and carried it out

sen...

Surrenders that are planned with foresight and suddenly carried out without even taking into account neighboring obligations (meaning the Eastern Front – GEORG's note), betrays a great deal of irresponsibility; they are usually justified politically, without the responsible leaders having more than a very limited insight into the overall situation. The Second World War also offers examples of this.« It is clear that the group of General EISENHOWER's German helpers was meant here.

Albert KESSELRING couldn't say more at the time. According to his son, Dr. Rainer KESSELRING, was with his father

When writing his memoirs seven years after the end of the war, a certain amount of consideration was required in his written statements. The idea of not endangering former comrades - subordinates and superiors - with thoughtless statements also played a role.

### **Conclusion on the German resistance in Normandy**

In a long, bloody war against a multitude of opponents, the German Wehrmacht fought quite successfully in Normandy for quite some time, although some of their higher-ranking generals appeared to be working toward defeat or fighting with only one hand behind their back.

In the unequal combat, the competent officers (but not the conspirators?) were killed or wounded at an alarming rate. A corps commander died in an air raid, three divisional commanders were killed by Allied fighter-bombers, and nearly the entire staff of Panzer Group West was killed in a massive air raid designed to wipe out their headquarters.

But the combat troops still believed in the German cause and put their trust in Field Marshal ROMMEL. He was famous for his

victories against the British and Americans in Africa, and many of his men, up to and including divisional commanders, were

persuaded by HITLER's assertion that if they drove back the Allied invasion to the sea, Germany would turn east again and the Soviets could defeat.

In the first month of fighting in Normandy, the Germans recorded 96,000 dead, wounded or captured. Only 6,000 replacement men and 17 new tanks got through to the front.

The German frontline commanders made excellent use of the Normandy terrain to delay or stop the Allied advance as much as possible. Thus, in the first month of the Battle of Normandy, the Germans destroyed almost 550 Allied tanks: 227 were destroyed by their own tanks from self-propelled guns or self-propelled guns, 105 by anti-aircraft guns, 36 by artillery and 108 by infantry in close combat.

Although the Wehrmacht had made extensive preparations to resist the Western Allies in France for several months, a deadly mix of material Allied superiority, treachery and sabotage did not succeed.

botage of high-ranking German officers to survive the material battle in the west.

When resistance in the Falaise pocket came to an end in mid-August 1944, the western German army in France had played out. Of the 38 German divisions deployed on the Normandy front, 25 had ceased to exist. The Wehrmacht had lost almost half a million men in the West. There were only 70 German tanks left on the entire western front. Around 30,000 German vehicles of all types, 3,500 aircraft, 2,300 guns and 1,300 tanks were destroyed or left behind between Bayeux and Paris.

### ›Hermann plan‹, part 2: simultaneous stab in the back in the East?

General EISENHOWER reported after the war that American equipment losses in France had been extremely high. For example, the Allies needed 36,000 new small arms, 700 mortars, 500 tanks, 4,500 vehicles, and 100 field artillery pieces to replace each month. The consumption of ammunition and mortar shells in Northwest Europe was 8 million rounds per month, and at the end of July 1944 General EISENHOWER and Field Marshal MONTGOMERY in Normandy still feared a trench warfare like that in World War I, with a potentially negative outcome for the Allies. Only after the breakthrough of Avranches could General EISENHOWER face the future with confidence. From today's point of view, one must be amazed that the Germans, despite their material inferiority, despite betrayal and sabotage in their own ranks, were able to hold off the Allies for so long.

Was there also a stab in the back of the fighting front on the eastern front almost at the same time? It would have to be examined whether the collapse of the "Army Group Center" on the Eastern Front in June/July 1944 could not be partly explained by German treason.

Here, too, the Russian advance was recognized in good time, and there should not have been any doubt as to the target of the shock armies. Despite careful Russian efforts to maintain secrecy, radio surveillance, aerial photos and agent reports showed what the enemy was up to. At the beginning of June 1944, a courier plane was shot down in the battle area of the 252nd Silesian Infantry Division that contained handwritten documents from the 3rd Soviet Air Army about the planned major offensive, in which the proud armies of the German "Army Group Center" were involved in the greatest disaster in Germany.

schon war history should go down a little later. Lieutenant General MELZER, the commander of the 252nd Infantry Division, had of course forwarded the captured documents to the superior 9th Infantry Division.

Corps forwarded. Nobody responded! As in the Normandy, HITLER and the Fuhrer Headquarters continued to believe that the Russians would attack elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> When the offensive then broke out, so many 'conspicuous'

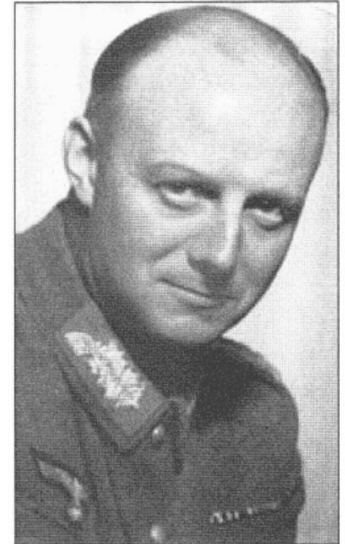
German leadership errors occurred, as in the West, that the Russian major offensive 'Bagration' became HITLER's greatest military defeat ever. Panzer divisions drove around pointlessly, reserves were squandered in the wrong places, and an entire army (the 4th Army) was (apparently?) headlessly 'forgotten' by the High Command of the Army Group. The knitting pattern of these and many other 'oddities' looks familiar. To this day it has never been clarified who was responsible for the abuses on the German side.

Some claim that General Henning VON TRESCKOW, Chief of Staff of the 2nd Army in Army Group Center since November 1943, played a similar role to General SPEIDEL in the West and infiltrated the entire Army Group Staff with conspirators.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, as early as 1943 the former German Chief of General Staff Ludwig BECK declared to Wilhelm LEUSCHNER, who was to become Vice-Chancellor after a successful coup d'état : "There are now enough confidants in command posts on the Eastern Front so that the war can be regulated until the regime collapses."<sup>3</sup> Even during the war it was widely assumed in Wehrmacht circles that the rapid collapse of the "Army Group Center" could largely be explained by treason

Here, too, post-war historians succeeded in silencing this discussion. There is remarkably little literature on the Eastern Front in the summer of 1944. By July 1944 alone, more than 350,000 German soldiers had died or been taken prisoner in the Army Group Center should be moved near the German border. In the summer of 1944 the time had come.

<sup>1</sup> Paul CARELL, *Scorched Earth. The battle between the Volga and the Vistula*, Ullstein, Berlin 1966, p. 438 f., 441 ff.



Henning VON TRESCKOW.

<sup>2</sup> Hans MEISER, *Betrayed Traitors*, Druffel, Stegen 2006, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup> JF TAYLOR, *July 20, 1944*, Thersal 1968, p. 578.

<sup>4</sup> Percy E. SCHRAMM (ed.), *War Diary of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, 1944-45*, part volume 1, Pawlak, Hersching 1982,

<sup>5</sup> Hans MEISER, *Betrayed Traitors*, Druffel, Stegen 2006, p. 235.

## Abbot 2: The Battle of France is lost

### The retreat: building bridges or cognac, sabotage and living well

After the Battle of Falaise, the German retreat from France came in great haste. The river crossings were a particular problem here. Janusz PIEKALKIEWICZ grippingly described the terrible scenes that took place among the German units:<sup>1</sup> »Meanwhile, the troops that were to be retreated were arriving at the Seine crossings. The mighty bridge at Elbeuf was destroyed by bombs, and in Oissel, 10 km south of Rouen, all access roads to the only temporary bridge over the Seine are blocked.

<sup>1</sup> Janusz PIEKALKIEWICZ, *Invasion. France 1944*, Southwest, Munich 1979, p. 244.

Miles of vehicles line up in rows of two or three. Files, equipment and suitcases are burned in the surrounding fields. In Oissel itself, officers direct traffic with pistols in their hands. A clearing squad on the bridge ruthlessly dumps all stranded vehicles into the stream. In the bends of the lower Seine near Elbeuf, the II SS Panzer Corps defended about 60

An important moment for the Allies:  
General PATTON about crosses the Seine at the head of his tanks.

